The Nation

FOUNDED 1865

Vol. CXXXVI NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1933 No. 3524

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES: Five dollars per annum postpaid in the United States; to Canada, $5.50; and to other foreign countries, $6.00.

THE NATION, No. 20 Vesey Street, New York City, Cable Address: NATION, New York. Muriel C. Gray, Advertising Manager. British Agent, Miss Gertrude M. Cross, 23 Brunswick Square, London W. C. 1, England.

THAT THE MILITARY FORCES of the United States are merely "a glorified bill-collecting agency" was the declaration of Major General Smedley D. Butler, U. S. M. C., retired, before a Brooklyn forum, according to the New York *Herald Tribune*. He related further that he had been "canned" in Haiti because "I didn't want to make the Haitians raise sugar" for a New York bank, and added, "I wouldn't want to see a boy of mine march out with a Wall Street collar about his neck." The authorship of this testimony makes it valuable. General Butler served extensively both in Nicaragua and in Haiti. He was reputed to be the roughest of all the treat-'em-rough marine officers. *The Nation* has long contended that the whole Haitian episode was motivated by the desire of American concessionaires to cash in on their dubious investments. For this sordid end the military and diplomatic strength of this great nation was mobilized. The recent attempt of the Hoover-Stimson regime, by means of a further ironclad treaty, to guarantee the security of investments which at home would have shared the fate of similar speculations is the latest episode in this discreditable chapter of American foreign policy. Of General Butler it may perhaps fairly be said that he serves his country better in peace than in war. On his own testimony he was, while in uniform, collecting for private interests. His present frankness on the lecture platform serves the interests of the American people. It gives them the first confirmation from a quasi-official source of their betrayal by their supposed servants in Washington. Apart from the great losses throughout Latin America resulting from ill-will, some $22,000,000 of American taxpayers' money and the lives of a score of American boys have been sacrificed in Haiti since 1915 so that a few bank and railroad stockholders might be certain of their dividends.

TOMATOES AND POTATOES may long since have been cheaper, but not power and light, at least not appreciably; nor are the rates within striking distance of those which would prevail if regulation were effective. The failure of regulation to protect the consumer has long been evident. That even the employee of our profitable State-protected monopolies in no wise shares either the prosperity or the security of his absentee-owner employers is exemplified in the policies and practices of the Brooklyn Edison Company discussed elsewhere in this issue. Were the company's reduction of employment necessitated by hard times, it could perhaps be justified. But the depression simply serves as a pretext for squeezing the already underpaid worker for the benefit of the common stockholder. The consumer does not benefit. Reduction in the price of materials and labor costs is not passed on to him. It is a paradox, and a striking example of the lag in our political and economic practices, that at the time when the State is seeking more taxes from the public to take care of more unemployed, it extends its benevolent protection to a public utility which, on the one hand, increases the public's burden by unduly high rates and, on the other, adds to the general distress by increasing unemployment. Why should the State's protection be limited to those in the industry who neither toil nor spend?

THAT REPEATING, false counting, intimidation of voters, and other irregularities in the Twentieth Congressional District contributed to the defeat of Representative Fiorello H. La Guardia in November is unquestioned. But to obtain, at this late date, evidence sufficient to prove the invalidity of somewhat more than 1,000 votes credited in the returns to Mr. La Guardia's opponent, James J. Lanzetta, may not prove easy. For against La Guardia, staunch liberal, were arrayed an unscrupulous Tammany and a conniving or at least indifferent Republican organization. The opposition of the Republican organization to party members who maintain their independence of thought and action is not new. The flagrant attempt to defeat Senator Geroge W. Norris in Nebraska in 1930 by running a spurious George W. Norris against him is still fresh in the public mind. Another contested election which will come before the House was in the Third Maine District. There the Republican machine was determined to beat the progressive Ralph O. Brewster, twice Maine's Governor. Having failed in the primary, the Republican organization entered the Democratic lists. It sponsored the candidacy of a reactionary never before conspicuously associated with the Democratic Party. His election was reported. But illegal registration

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of voters, falsely marked ballots, and miscounting, subsequently uncovered, prevented his obtaining a certificate of election. The Republican organization managed, however, to deadlock the Republican Governor's Council, so that neither candidate has been certified. The next House will have to hear the evidence. In the case of both La Guardia and Brewster, the services of unusually disinterested and enlightened public servants are at stake.

THE DEFLATION of our big-business statesmen closely parallels the depression curve. Two weeks ago Owen D. Young's feet of clay were revealed to a long-reverential public. Now the same $2,000,000 loan of General Electric money to Samuel Insull, when that noble Athenian was already bankrupt, discloses the stuffing under the shirt of Melvin H. Traylor. It will be recalled that Mr. Traylor was deemed one of the pre-convention Democratic Presidential possibilities. This sagacious financier, whose bank, the First National of Chicago, had already advanced millions on Insull collateral and might therefore have apprehended the impending Insull insolvency, was likewise a director of General Electric. He too felt that the loan should be made. In fact, Gerard Swope's testimony indicates that it was chiefly on Mr. Traylor's recommendation that he acted so generously. Mr. Traylor has been among those mentioned for the Secretaryship of the Treasury in the Roosevelt Cabinet just as Mr. Young had been mentioned for both that post and the Secretaryship of State. At the present rate of liquidation of once great reputations the forecasters will, before March 4, have to start picking a Cabinet all over again.

THERE IS GRAVE DANGER that the Dies bill, which has already passed the House, may be quietly approved by the Senate and signed by the President before the groups opposed to this vicious measure have had an opportunity to throw their united strength against it. The Dies bill provides for the deportation of alien Communists, and its definition of a Communist is so broad and loose that it can be interpreted to include virtually every foreign-born resident or visitor who is not frankly and whole-heartedly in sympathy with non-Socialist forms of government. At present substantial proof is required by law to show that the alien radical is actually advocating the overthrow of the American government by force or violence. Under the Dies bill a mere expression of opinion, however lightly voiced, would suffice to render the alien deportable. More than that, the pending measure refers only to persons advocating the overthrow of governments not under the control of Communists, and thus by implication would establish the United States as an asylum for foreigners conspiring against the Soviet regime in Russia or against other communistic or socialistic governments that may be set up elsewhere. The various organizations and individuals interested in preserving civil liberties should fight this measure with all the power at their command.

WHY HAS WILLIAM GREEN suddenly taken to blustering about general strikes and the class war? These phrases seem strange, not to say insincere, coming from the successor to Gompers. There is little doubt that Green has taken this militant attitude because of widespread discontent in the ranks of organized labor. The president of the American Federation of Labor must do something to still the growing unrest and make sure that rebellion will not sweep him out of his job. The workers want determined action, aggressive leadership that will relieve them of some of the horrors of unemployment. President Green offers them the right to strike, a weapon which under normal conditions has its advantages, but which under the present circumstances would be the least effective that organized labor could possibly adopt. The employers are not worried by such threats; there is more than enough surplus labor to go around. For the same reason the workers who still have jobs are likely to hang on to them as long as they can. Yet in appearing before a Senate committee William Green can talk about a "universal strike." If the American Federation of Labor had in the past been more consistent and vigorous in defending the workers' rights, these warnings might have real weight. But its traditional policy of cooperating with capital, largely at the expense of the workers, has all but destroyed its influence.

A GOOD DEAL of chop-licking has gone on among certain unsympathetic correspondents and other observers of Soviet Russia's recent economic difficulties. One might almost imagine that the rest of the world was enjoying good times, so impressed are these persons by the evidences of hunger and industrial breakdown in Russia. Now, at the end of the period—actually four years and three months—of the first Five-Year Plan, Stalin has issued a statement analyzing clearly, if a bit optimistically, the present economic situation, and announcing a slower tempo for the next two or three years coupled with an increase in the output of articles of consumption rather than machines of production. Thus, by executive fiat, the dictatorship alters the course and heads the ship in a new direction. Incidentally, it is exactly this course that Louis Fischer pointed out, in our last issue, as the essential one for Russia to follow.

KING ALEXANDER of Jugoslavia, according to reports from various European capitals, is planning to substitute a more democratic regime for the present dictatorship. There is also some talk of admitting the failure of the Serbian scheme to establish a unified national state which was to have been dominated by the Serbs. According to present reports, a definite measure of autonomy is to be accorded to the Croats and Slovenes and probably also to the Macedonians and to one or two other minority groups. This may well prove the solution of a desperate internal situation, as well as of an increasingly grave international crisis involving primarily Jugoslavia and Italy. The agitation of the Croats recently took on such dangerous proportions that the Belgrade government found it expedient to renew its quarrel with Italy in the hope of diverting the attention of the Jugoslavs from their domestic difficulties. It was decided that Italy was responsible for the Croatian independence campaign, and a formal protest was sent to Rome. Soon thereafter Mussolini asked Albania, Jugoslavia's neighbor to the south, to join Italy in a customs union. Belgrade interpreted this move as unwarranted interference in Balkan politics. Rome was informed accordingly. The result has been to stir up a great deal of bitter feeling in both countries. The historic Venetian lions, which for six centuries had stood guard at the entrance of the harbor of Trau, now a Jugoslav port, were destroyed by patriotic vandals. After this incident the

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Italian government became noticeably more bellicose in its attitude toward Jugoslavia. Other European governments have exerted diplomatic pressure upon both Belgrade and Rome, urging them to compose their differences, but as yet this intervention has had no apparent effect.

PREMIER AZANA OF SPAIN has managed to keep the republican government running smoothly and firmly partly because of the strong support he has received from the bourgeois elements in the country and partly because of the loyalty of the Civil Guard. However, in attempting to satisfy these groups he has had to follow a moderate, one might even say conservative, policy. This has of necessity delayed the industrial and agrarian reforms which the revolution seemed to promise, and as a result the workers and peasants have become increasingly restive. Though the Civil Guard has supposedly been "purged" of its royalist sympathies, the workers and peasants suspect it and are demanding that it be disbanded. They accuse Azaña of having established a bourgeois dictatorship, and there is much evidence at hand to support this charge. Their discontent has created a fertile field for syndicalist and anarchist agitation, which now has led to serious disturbances in which scores of persons have been killed. If these disturbances continue, the Azaña regime will have to move to the left or face the prospect of being overthrown by the radicals. Premier Azaña appears disposed to combat the spread of radicalism with the help of the Civil Guard, and this suggests that Spain may be in for an extended period of civil warfare.

INCREASINGLY THE CONSUMER may come into his own. Now we have the indestructible radio tube, extremely simple in construction and inexpensive—indestructible even after transmitting Ed Wynn. In a Newark laboratory the new tubes have been operating continuously for 1,200 hours. They are without vacuum. More than that, no A or filament power is necessary. Engineers agree that this bulb is likely to revolutionize the whole vacuum-tube and radio industry in a very short time. At least here is promise of a device which should benefit the consumer tremendously. He is denied the good-for-a-lifetime automobile and the razor blade which lasts several years and ends the difficult old problem of what to do with used blades. He is still waiting for the indestructible suit made of ramie. Let him give thanks, therefore, if and when the everlasting radio tube with its salutary effect upon the cost of hearing and living is put on the market.

WE NOTE WITH SATISFACTION that John Hamill, author of a volume dealing with the early career of President Hoover, has retracted some of the more sensational charges made in his book. All fair-minded persons must deeply resent attempts to vilify unjustly the President of the United States. If Mr. Hamill is guilty of wilfully distorting the facts so as to cause misleading inferences to be drawn, as he is reported to have admitted, he should be prosecuted. Mr. Hamill's admission that his "interpretations were in error in some instances" does not clear Mr. Hoover's record of all the grave charges that have been made against him. The essential facts remain unchallenged. While, as was pointed out in several of the reviews appearing in *The Nation,* the majority of the books dealing with the President's early life were so obviously inspired by malice and partisanship as to be untrustworthy, at least one of the volumes—"The Rise of Herbert Hoover," by Walter W. Liggett—was restrained in tone and supported its charges with impressive documentation. The fact that no adequate reply has ever been made to the questions raised by this book has resulted in considerable confusion regarding the whole of Mr. Hoover's career. Such explanations as have been made of his role in the seizure of the Kaiping mines from Chinese control have been unconvincing in the light of available records. What is more to the point, no evidence has been advanced to show that he ever took a vigorous stand against the stock-flotation practices and labor exploitation of his business associates, or that he was even aware of the deeper social implications either of their actions or his own as a promoter and financier.

CALVIN COOLIDGE succeeded in pleasing the great masses of his fellow-citizens and yet never comprehended, or was able to comprehend, the deeper meaning of the economic surges on which he was borne forward like a chip on the crest of a wave. He reduced government problems to the sublimely simple terms to which he reduced the question of the war debts—"They hired the money." He dealt with issues only as they were forced upon him, left no constructive suggestions to cure our ills, and made no contribution whatever to the science of government. He vetoed the bonus, it is true; but it was easy for him to be courageous when he knew that his friends and backers in Wall Street would have damned him had he done anything else. In large degree, the Calvin Coolidge the public read of was the creation of press agents and the newspapers; even his famous telegram on the occasion of the Boston police strike, "There is no right to strike against the public safety anywhere, any time," was composed for him. The reporting of his death and funeral followed the same pattern. The crowds around the church were represented as bowed down with grief and awe, silent and reverent. An eyewitness assures us that it was a pushing and pulling rabble of sightseers. So the Coolidge myth persisted to the end.

MRS. HENRY MOSKOWITZ, whose death occurred in New York on January 2, was a remarkable figure in the philanthropic and political life of New York. To Alfred E. Smith she rendered years of invaluable service as aid, adviser, and confidante, not to say general manager. For years she ran his publicity bureau, helped him with his speeches, took part in planning his campaigns, and was generally so useful and so devoted to him that it is no wonder that Mr. Smith broke down when he heard of her death. But Belle Moskowitz by no means devoted all her rare talents and unusual mentality to Mr. Smith. She was distinguished in her own right. She was a leader in philanthropic undertakings before her affiliation with Mr. Smith began, and her counsel was widely sought at all times by the group of undaunted men and women who in good and bad times steadily labor for the social and moral deliverance of the metropolis. Rarely has the city seen such an outpouring of men and women of all walks of life as attended her funeral to bear testimony to the breadth and nobility of her soul and to an intellect which, particularly in political affairs, was the equal of that of anyone of her day.

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Again a Challenge to Humanity

THAT is what Japan's latest action in Northern China is—a challenge to humanity. The Shanhaikwan horror is but a repetition of the original Manchurian episode. According to Captain John W. Thomason, Jr., of the United States Marines, somebody threw a bomb at the railroad station at Shanhaikwan on the night of New Year's day. The Chinese say that it was thrown by Japanese or by agents in Japanese pay; the Japanese assert it was exploded by Chinese. The next morning a detail of Japanese soldiers was fired on and a lieutenant killed. Again, as in Manchuria, Japanese reinforcements for the 300 Japanese troops appeared as if by magic from their station four hours away and attacked in full force with all arms, including tanks and airplanes. On the following day the Japanese succeeded in driving out the Chinese Ninth Brigade of regulars after a most stubborn resistance and took over the city. The daily press reports that Shanhaikwan is "a smoldering ruin"; there were large "civilian casualties," that is, unarmed civilians to a number estimated as high as 3,000, in addition to 1,700 Chinese soldiers, were killed, and 100,000 refugees are reported fleeing from the stricken city "in unheated box-cars which are trailing into Tientsin and Peiping." In other words, there has been wholesale slaughter because the Japanese went ahead as if the whole Shanhaikwan episode had been planned in advance. They revenged the bomb and the dead lieutenant with the same ferocity that they displayed at Shanghai, and with the same utter disregard of consequences.

It is, of course, a pure accident that the city in which this "incident" occurred is in a most strategic position, being only a few miles from the eastern end of the Great Wall. It is thus nearly on the border between Manchuria and China proper and it was occupied by the Japanese, without the semblance of an excuse, just a year ago without much opposition from the Chinese. It is a pure coincidence, too, that this "incident" took place in the very city one would wish to occupy if bent on a move toward Peiping or if one were intending to set up another "independent state" under Japanese control, this time centering about Peiping and Tientsin.

This is the very plan which has been attributed to the Japanese for months past. Shanhaikwan is, of course, a purely Chinese town, and no state of war exists between Japan and China. But the Japanese are now demanding the withdrawal of all Chinese troops from the town, while offering also to withdraw theirs and make it a "neutral" city. Japanese troops will not be withdrawn until these terms are accepted, and the reports persist that an apology by the Chinese must also be forthcoming. Tokio reports a determination to "localize" the affair. But the fact remains that the camel's head is again in the tent; the Japanese are to all intents and purposes within the Great Wall and are in a most fortunate position from which to go on and further divide China.

We repeat that all this is an affront to humanity. There was not the slightest necessity to maintain a Japanese garrison in Shanhaikwan, and as long as such garrisons exist the possibility of "unfortunate incidents" is ever present. Here are the facts—once more flung in the face of the League of Nations, which has just successfully shelved the Lytton report and has listened to downright defiance of its authority by the Japanese representatives at Geneva. What is the United States going to do about it? What are Great Britain and France going to say to this latest slaughter of innocents in the war which is no war? Is public opinion utterly ineffective? Must the world sit back with hands folded and watch the progressive carving up of China? Is the United States government, after having advanced the Stimson-Hoover doctrine, going to sit by idly without a protest of any kind? If so, the League might as well be disbanded and the collapse of the Stimson-Hoover doctrine openly confessed, and the Japanese might as well be told that they may go ahead and wreak their bloody and conscienceless will upon the Chinese people until they are satiated.

The government of the United States should first let its attitude be unmistakably known. Following that it can and should take another step—it should appeal to Congress for an embargo on all shipments of arms and ammunition. We understand, of course, that if the United States denies to Japan the right to purchase arms and ammunition, the Japanese may go to Germany, or Great Britain, or France, or Italy, and purchase there what they need. None the less, we think that the time has come for this action, and we believe that the Congress would almost unanimously vote such an embargo if the President appealed for it. Only three weeks ago a feeler came out from Washington to the effect that the President was going to ask for an embargo of this kind with special reference to the war in South America, so that the present belligerents in that part of the continent would not be able to get further military supplies from the United States. If that is worth doing in this smaller scene of hostilities and this relatively less important sphere of action, why should it not be done in regard to Japan? Even if it failed to be wholly effective, it would be a magnificent gesture of disapproval, for it would have behind it, we believe, the public opinion of America. It might even inspire the British and French governments to take a vigorous stand, instead of encouraging the Japanese to go ahead by their refusal to join hands with America or to support the recommendations of the Lytton Commission to the League of Nations.

Senator Dill offered a resolution in Congress last winter during the Shanghai fighting asking for such an embargo on arms shipments, and even Congressman Hamilton Fish has proposed the same thing and has made the striking statement, according to the Chicago *Journal of Commerce,* that "in the undeclared war between Bolivia and Paraguay American bankers have already loaned Bolivia $20,000,000 with which she has purchased munitions of war, largely in England, while millions of American people and their government are urging peaceful relations among nations." This conservative journal favors the embargo, declares that Secretary Stimson favors it, and asserts that it is now "up to President Hoover." He is, of course, a weak reed to lean upon. All the more reason why the public opinion of the country should make itself felt. We are for the embargo without the loss of a day.

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A Revolutionary Document

IT is no slight irony that it was Herbert Hoover who officially originated the survey which has culminated in the epoch-making report on "Recent Social Trends in the United States."* For it was under the aegis of the apostle of "rugged individualism," the embodiment of contented conservatism, that the factual and interpretative material was assembled which makes plain the imminence of and the imperative necessity for a profoundly altered political, economic, and social order. It was in the autumn of 1929, the final fall, indeed, of the old America—that the President of the United States, looking forth on a land seemingly flowing with milk and honey, summoned the social scientists to research and report. They were asked to provide "such a review as might supply a basis for the formulation of large national policies looking toward the next phase in the nation's development." Well, the report is timely. The next phase is here. Were the White House tempted to use the blue pencil on this as on the Wickersham report, only complete suppression would serve. For while the tempo of "Recent Social Trends" is measured, its attitude objective, and its presentation scholarly both in letter and spirit, it is, by cumulation of fact and inexorable deduction, the most formidable revolutionary document in our day and country.

It is obviously impossible to convey in brief compass the wide sweep and profundity of this collaboration. The initial two volumes comprise over 1,500 pages, divided into a "review of findings" and thirty-one chapters, each a monograph by experts; they are to be supplemented by thirteen volumes of additional detail. The committee members—Wesley C. Mitchell, Charles E. Merriam, Shelby M. Harrison, Alice Hamilton, Howard W. Odum, and William F. Ogburn—have not only justified their scholastic repute, but have enhanced it.

The report abstains from any direct comprehensive conclusions and recommendations. The broadest deduction to be made from its graphic reiterations is that, in a world transformed by invention, the American people have sought to carry on with an obsolete political structure, outworn economic principles and practices, and an increasing lag in social ideology. Our technical efficiency has outstripped our other capacities. Hence the astonishing contrasts—skyscraper and slum—and vast disorganization.

Politically our dominant philosophy has been that "the role of government is 'to provide the circumstances under which private initiative can operate most successfully.'" So "powerful individuals and groups have gone their own way" to the community's detriment. And although "our administrative areas are obvious anachronisms," the "units of government laid out a century ago are now too small for the discharge of various functions," yet "in governmental affairs . . . proposals for change have been identified with treason . . ."

Our economic system is signalized everywhere by conspicuous waste. Despite gains in shorter hours and higher earnings "there has been no such success against the terror of unemployment." Typical are the extractive industries. In the "prosperous" era from 1923 to 1929 some 3,300 bituminous coal mines were forced to close, 250,000 men lost their jobs, the wages of the rest have been cut again and again. Every year 150,000,000 tons of minable coal—equal to the entire post-war production of Germany—is lost through wasteful methods. Corresponding conditions obtain in the oil industry. Yet the roots of the evil are "imbedded in legal conceptions of mineral property transplanted from Tudor England." Our antiquated judicial system perpetuates economic inequalities. Our "judge-made law" arises from the social philosophies of judges. Progress is impeded by the "massive irresponsiveness of the bar and bench to the challenge of the present system of civil and criminal justice by modern social and economic conditions, and the indifference to the sweeping indictments of the drift by leading jurists."

Socially, conservative attitudes are responsible for much maladjustment to altered circumstance. "Some schools and colleges still offer courses which are survivals from the scholasticism of the Middle Ages." Materialism, our concepts of property, are a retarding force. "By virtue of commercialization the problem of leisure is bound up with purchasing." And there is the interesting suggestion: "Happiness and unhappiness have been little studied by science, yet happiness is one of our most cherished goals."

The report finds that social thinking and planning are our most pressing needs. To deal with surpluses, unemployment, underconsumption, "economic planning is called for." At present, however, "that phrase represents a social need rather than a social capacity." The best that can be done now "is to lay plans for more planning." And pointing to the unity of purpose and coordination achieved in the World War, the report asks: "Is it beyond the range of men's capacity some day to take the enhancement of social welfare as seriously as our generation took the winning of the war?"

In the immediate future the committee expects and welcomes more public enterprise and control of previously private functions. It "observes nothing alarming in the widely varying forms of social adjustment undertaken by government, whether maternal, paternal, or fraternal." "The alternative to constructive social initiative may conceivably be a prolongation of a policy of drift." More likely is some form of dictatorship in which "the basic decisions are frankly imposed by power groups, and violence may subordinate technical intelligence in social guidance."

Well, the collective intelligence of our social scientists has given us a chart so that we need no longer drift, but may steer straight ahead. As the report makes clear, we must, before we can move forward, understand the phenomena of change and their far-reaching implications. The report lays the cornerstone of understanding on which alone a new order can be erected. It happens incidentally to be an intensely readable, at times, a thrilling story, with its glimpses of a better society arising from the old on a soil in America perhaps "not . . . unfavorable for cultivation." And history may yet regard this as the first step toward a Magna Charta of a reemancipated people and as the outstanding achievement associated with the Presidency of Herbert Hoover.

* "Recent Social Trends in the United States." Report of the President's Research Committee on Social Trends. McGraw-Hill Book Company. Two volumes. $10.

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The Parity Plan

THE farm "parity plan," favorably reported to the House by the Agricultural Committee by a vote of 14 to 8, is even more dangerous than the allotment plan it supersedes. It aims to pay a special bonus, at the consumer's expense, to the producers of four farm products—wheat, cotton, tobacco, and hogs. This bonus is not to be a fixed amount: it is to be sufficient to give to wheat, cotton, tobacco, and hogs their so-called "pre-war purchasing power" in terms of other commodities. The duty and the power to decide what this amount is will fall upon the Secretary of Agriculture, who is to be given dictatorial powers never before held by any individual in our government in times of peace.

The parity plan is, in brief, a plan to pay to a special group of producers a direct subsidy without parallel, in its size, in our national history. This subsidy is to be raised by a direct tax on the necessities of life. It is to fall on the consumer of bread, ham, pork, cigarettes, and of the cheapest clothes. It is to fall on, among others, the 12,000,000 jobless. It would amount to probably 100 to 300 per cent on the commodities affected—compared to this a sales tax of 2¼ per cent on those commodities pales into insignificance. It is claimed by some of the supporters of the measure that the added price of these commodities would not be passed on to the ultimate consumer but would be absorbed by the "middle men." There is no evidence that the middle men—the flour mills, the textile industry, and so on—could in such times as these support the burden.

Even if one assumed that the plan would benefit the farmers as a whole at the expense of everyone else, it would be difficult to see how one could justify in principle a plan by which an unemployed man buying bread would be compelled to help support the owner of a large wheat farm. In practice the four groups of farmers subsidized would be subsidized at the expense of all other farmers who are producing dairy products, poultry and eggs, sheep, oats, barley, rye, buckwheat, rice, hay, beans, peanuts, potatoes, apples, peaches, pears, grapes, oranges, lemons, grapefruit, asparagus, cabbage, cantaloupes, carrots, and onions. Are we to subsidize each of these? The sponsors for the present parity plan hold that raising the price of the four lucky farm products will raise the price of all farm products; but it will be hard to get the raisers of the other farm products to believe this. The subsidy would mean no net increase in the country's purchasing power, for it would take away from the consumer exactly as much purchasing power as it would give to the favored producer.

The final excuse for the bill is that the manufacturer is already receiving a subsidy through the tariff, and that the farmer must now receive his through the parity plan. In other words, as the manufacturer is supported out of compulsory doles from the farmer, the farmer must now be supported out of compulsory doles from the manufacturer. This is Alice in Wonderland economics; the mythical islanders who lived by taking in each other's washing begin to seem relatively plausible. What is wrong with a drastic tariff reduction that would open the world's markets to the farmer's products and no longer make it necessary for him to endow the manufacturer?

Cosmic Row

THE scientists gathered at Atlantic City for the annual meeting of the American Society for the Advancement of Science may have learned a good deal from one another, but the spectacle which they presented was not entirely edifying to the layman. Drs. Millikan and Compton, the two Nobel Prize winners, clashed acrimoniously, and though the former has protested against the account of his attitude given by the correspondent of the New York *Times*, it is obvious enough that there was more heat than light in the argument which revolved around stupendous deductions from highly dubious data.

Professor Millikan continues to harp upon the cosmic implications of the "cosmic ray" which he discovered, and which, according to him, is not produced by ordinary electrons because it is not influenced by the earth's magnetic field. Professor Compton replies that it is so influenced, and to that Professor Millikan retorts with something very much like a polite form of the lie direct. Yet upon the basis of data so dubious that two of the most famous physicists in the world cannot agree even as to the immediate concrete facts in hand, the one proclaims that the universe is constantly building itself up while the other is equally positive that the classic conception of a cosmos slowly running down is correct.

To the layman it is all more than a little disturbing. During the course of a century he has gradually built up such a faith in the hard-headed caution and accuracy of the scientist that he accepts quite docilely many statements about nature and the world against which mere common sense would rebel. He has, with many beneficial consequences, tended to put himself more and more in the scientists' hands, but his faith is being seriously shaken by the all-too-evident willingness of eminent scientists to announce stupendous conclusions which must be unjustified if they can be so readily contradicted by other scientists equally eminent. We now have the very highest scientific authority for stating positively that the universe is "expanding" and also that it is building itself up. Unfortunately, however, we also have the very highest authority for stating positively that it is contracting and running itself down. Under the circumstances, is it possible to conclude anything except that both statements are made upon the basis of evidence obviously inadequate?

The true explanation is, of course, that Drs. Millikan and Compton are really discussing religion while they pretend to discuss science. The former, a religious optimist, does not want to believe that the universe is running down, and quite frankly displays his pleasure in announcing that the cosmic rays are the "birth cries" of raw matter being born and that they furnish "some experimental evidence that the Creator is still on the job." Dr. Compton may be neutral or he may be equally anxious to discount anything which would weaken the support which science gives to a skeptical materialist. In any event, however, it is evident that their argument would never have taken the form it did if both had had only a disinterested desire to get to the bottom of the facts involved. An outsider can hardly help feeling that neither has enough information to draw any conclusions at all, and that the heat of the discussion was generated entirely by that age-old disturber of the peace, the *odium theologicum*.

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Issues and Men

Calvin Coolidge

CALVIN COOLIDGE was a child of fate if ever there was one. But he was more than that; he was a perfect product of his time and as such he exactly suited the American mood at the moment when that same kindly fate so generously removed President Harding from the scene just in time to save him from utter disaster and humiliation. A few weeks before Mr. Coolidge was elevated to the Presidency one of the ablest United States Senators—one who is always regular at election time—spoke privately of the Vice-President with complete pity. Mr. Harding would have to be renominated, but Mr. Coolidge—why, this curious and odd person, who had made no friends among the Senators and ate his lunch from a tin box in a corner of a committee room, would, of course, be retired to private life. Presto change, and Mr. Coolidge was in the White House and this very Senator was one of the first to render him obeisance, while an extraordinarily servile and romantic press seized upon the "curious and odd" person and painted of him a portrait that bore little or no resemblance to the actual Chief Executive.

But this was nothing new in Mr. Coolidge's career. When Oregon nominated him for the Vice-Presidency on the ticket with Mr. Harding at Chicago in 1920, the Massachusetts journalists present roared with laughter. It was a joke; it was Coolidge's luck again. For they knew that there was no truth in the story that Governor Calvin Coolidge had broken the Boston police strike with the fearless courage and intrepidity which the press attributed to him throughout the length and breadth of the land. They had read the report of the citizens' committee which cooperated with the authorities in handling the strike and had read over the signature, not of a radical, but of the late James J. Storrow, then the head of Lee Higginson and Company, that when the crisis came and the counsel of Governor Coolidge was sought, he was not to be found for forty-eight hours. The necessary action was taken without him; the honors, such as they were, belonged elsewhere. His own bombastic proclamation, telegraphed everywhere, came one day after the strike had been settled by Mayor Peters. But Mr. Coolidge never disavowed the unearned praise showered upon him. He was content to rise by the myth that made the Oregon delegates believe that they were honoring a great American.

Beyond that, nothing stands out in the early career of the man who was "sold" to the American people as the embodiment of the simple and rugged virtues of the simple and rugged Vermont from which he came. He chose Northampton, Massachusetts, for his permanent home, and he rose in due course like many another to the Governorship of that State because he was a Republican in a Republican town, in a Republican county, in a Republican State, and because he was absolutely loyal and obedient to the party machine, without a spark of initiative or independence. He did not distinguish himself in war time when he was Lieutenant Governor; before that he was an undistinguished legislator. But he belonged to the period in which, after you got to be a Republican president of the Massachusetts Senate, no power could stop your becoming Lieutenant Governor and Governor. The custom of years had decreed this and so it was in Mr. Coolidge's case.

Once in the Presidency Mr. Coolidge's characteristics as portrayed by the press tickled the public no end. The plain men of the farms and the small towns felt him to be one of themselves. The multitudes in the cities, reveling in an orgy of getting rich quick and spending as quickly, attributed their luck to Calvin Coolidge. The "masters of America"—as Woodrow Wilson called them—the great heads of the corporations which dominate our social, business, and political life, found in him just the complaisant national figurehead they so eagerly desired. He had been utterly silent in the face of the corruption of the Harding Cabinet, in which, by invitation, he sat; he never talked, as did Mr. Wilson, about our being "in the midst of a revolution" against the great capitalists. Nor did he denounce any of the big business men as "malefactors of great wealth," as did Theodore Roosevelt; and there was no chance under him of such shocking scandals as disgraced the Harding regime. So as the tide of prosperity rose higher and higher, it became "Coolidge prosperity," as if he had created it by some wave of a magic wand. And when he capped the climax, just before the expiration of his Presidency, by prostituting the White House as it has never been prostituted before by his statement of January 6, 1928, encouraging the maddest, wildest speculation in the world's history, the spokesmen of finance and big business called him blest.

Calvin Coolidge's shrewd sense that it was time to leave the White House saved him. Had he run again and been elected he would today have been as deflated and hated as Herbert Hoover himself. He made his choice and retired with the Coolidge myth still unexploded. He was still the wise, homely, simple, penurious citizen who went—for a time—from the White House to his $35-a-month apartment in Northampton. His thinly trickling, often unintentional, vein of humor continued to be exploited to the full. He became the "Sage of Northampton"; the noble Cincinnatus back at his plow. And only a few of the irreverent and the dissatisfied continued to point out, as they had done throughout his Administration, that not a single great constructive step was taken during his Administration; that, on the contrary, the Coolidge policies, so highly praised, were based solely on the crassest materialism and inexorably helped to drive the country into the limitless disaster in which it finds itself today. This disaster spells the end of many things. It is above all the final harvest of the policies of Calvin Coolidge and of those for whom he stood, whose desires he fulfilled, whose faithful servant he was.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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Brooklyn Edison Against the Public

By JEROME COUNT

HARD times seem to mean little or nothing to the stockholders and managers of the electric-power industry. Although some of the holding companies have collapsed, to the detriment of thousands of stockholders, most of the large operating companies have, despite the depression, continued to pile up huge profits and pay good dividends. Only the consumers and workers have failed to share in this remarkable prosperity. Indeed, these two groups, but particularly the latter, have had to undergo sacrifices in order that the inflated dividend record of some of the utilities might be maintained. This is especially true in the case of the Brooklyn Edison Company, which through good times and bad for twenty-nine years has not once failed to declare its regular annual dividend of 8 per cent. This record remained unbroken in 1932. Thus, by virtue of a State-protected monopoly on Brooklyn's electric business, the original stock of the Brooklyn Edison Company has now been redeemed two and a half times over.

An 8 per cent dividend might not appear excessive at first glance, but when examined in its relation to other factors its excessive nature stands clearly revealed. For example, the profits available for payment of dividends by Brooklyn Edison have amounted during the depression to approximately 30 per cent of the gross income of the company. In 1931 the sum of $13,400,000 was available for dividends, as compared with gross sales in that year of $48,000,000. In 1930, $13,700,000 was available for this purpose out of $46,000,000 gross income. The dividends actually paid in 1931 amounted to $8,800,000, and $10,000,000 was paid out in 1932.

Brooklyn Edison's continued payment of dividends presents a marked contrast both to its labor policy and to the needs of the community to which it supplies electricity. Its issued capital stock increased from $19,000,000 in 1921 to $125,000,000 ten years later. This means that the 8 per cent dividend rate is now paid on 600 per cent more stock than a decade ago. Electric consumption, however, has increased only 10 to 15 per cent each year. Dividend tribute levied upon the people of Brooklyn has increased five times more rapidly than their demand for electric service. Meanwhile, Brooklyn Edison has not neglected its future. It added $4,200,000 in 1931 to its surplus of $26,500,000. Its reserves were increased to $20,000,000. Its surplus has been increased by 250 per cent in the past five years alone.

With these facts a matter of record, it was astonishing to learn recently that 3,000 more men had been discharged by the company, increasing the lay-off to 5,000 for 1931 and 1932. Determined protests by the Brotherhood of Edison Employees have brought no relief, and it is fitting to inquire into Brooklyn Edison's labor policy as contrasted with its huge accelerated profits. The most recent reports disclose that Brooklyn Edison business for these two years will show a net increase of 38,000,000 kilowatt hours in electric sales over the year 1930. Dividends for 1932 totaled $10,000,000 —$1,200,000 more than was paid in 1931 and $2,800,000 more than in 1928, 1929, or 1930. Since 1921 the annual dividends paid have increased at the rate of 60 per cent. The pay roll, however, has increased only at the rate of 15 per cent each year—an increase in labor force and not in average wage.

It is significant that while the increase in the share of labor coincides with the increased demand for electricity —15 per cent annually—the stockholders' share in the benefits of a decade's expansion in this industry has exceeded both by 400 per cent. The year 1931 intensified this injustice by decreasing the pay roll by $1,126,017, while dividends increased by $1,600,000. The year 1932 crowned all previous Brooklyn Edison achievements with a $4,000,000 decrease in wage payments as compared with 1930, and a $2,800,000 increase in dividends compared with the same year.

The prospects for Edison employees is more dismal for 1933. Construction work will reach the vanishing-point and wage cuts are threatened, but dividends will continue their unbroken record of twenty-nine years. There is even danger that Brooklyn Edison will issue $15,000,000 more stock, now held in reserve, and again increase dividends by $1,200,000. The significance of these figures is even more striking when they are reduced to terms of the average worker and the average stockholder. In a typical year, 1926—before the Consolidated Gas Company assumed control of Brooklyn Edison—8,666 employees, devoting their entire year's labor to the production and distribution of electricity to more than 2,000,000 people, received an average annual wage per man of $1,500. The sum of $500, or one-third of this wage, was paid to 11,343 average stockholders enjoying the privileges of absentee ownership. The dividends distributed were equal to 48 per cent of the total amount paid to wage-earners. The elimination of dividends would have raised a miserable wage level—less than $30 a week in the boom year 1926—to $2,000 a year. It is well known that many skilled Edison employees, supporting families, earned little more than $25 weekly in boom times, while union men were paid two and three times as much. Mr. J. C. Parker, president of the Brooklyn Edison, has suggested that the relative permanence of jobs in his company justified the meager wages paid. Fourteen thousand Brooklyn Edison workers believed that thesis at the beginning of 1931. Since then 5,000 of them have become completely disillusioned; 2,000 workers have been out of the company's employ for two years and 3,000 more were dropped in 1932. These 5,000 men could have been retained at a cost of $5,000,000. During the same period Brooklyn Edison had $25,000,000 available for dividends (of which $18,800,000 was actually paid) and reserves of $22,000,000 were accumulated.

The desperate plight of Edison men, as a result of this inequitable labor policy, was brought out at a hearing held by the Public Committee on Power Utilities and Labor. A young worker twenty-seven years old, with a wife and two children to support, was asked to describe his circumstances since his discharge from the company. He testified: "My present circumstances are that I haven't worked for four months. The only job I received was a couple of days ago and I made $2. The relief committee paid my month's rent

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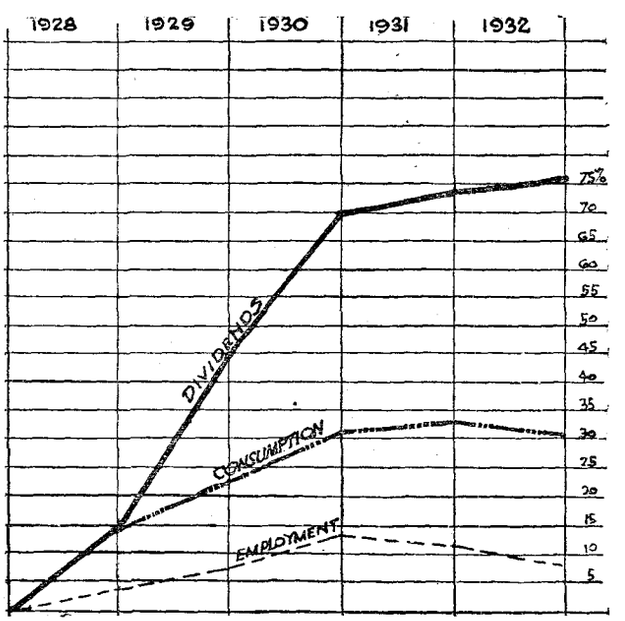
for me and supplied me with $2.50 a week to eat on." Mr. Parker, president of the Brooklyn Edison, with singular irony, was chairman of what his former employee calls the "relief committee" in the recent drive for unemployment relief funds. Mr. Parker pleaded with Brooklyn to donate $1,250,000. He apparently sees no moral problem involved in thus committing arson with one hand and playing the hose with the other.

It has been declared by Mr. Parker that construction projects on which these men were employed have been completed and, in his own words, "when a house is built, it can't be built again." Let us examine this claim. In 1928 Brooklyn Edison laid out a ten-year construction program, including replacement of overhead wires and improvement of distribution facilities generally. After the second year of this ten-year program, Brooklyn Edison discharged 40 per cent of its force and left 36,000,000 feet of overhead electric wire still to be placed underground. The State legislature declared this change to be a public necessity forty years ago, but at the rate at which it has progressed during the past five years, forty years more will be required for its completion. Yet Mr. Parker insists that Brooklyn Edison has no work for these 5,000 men to do. Similarly there are 15,000 customers whose service is to be transferred from direct to alternating current. Mention this to Mr. Parker and he answers, "We are way ahead of schedule." Excessive rates and underpaid and insecure employees are the keystone of Edison prosperity. The Public Service Commission has proved incapable of obtaining reasonable rates and until recently has avoided all responsibility for labor conditions in public utilities. Although it is believed that the present law grants adequate authority to act, public bodies have sought an express legislative mandate for fifteen years to direct the commission to deal with its problem. The constant threat of discharge hangs over the heads of Edison employees affiliating themselves with union activities. The American Federation of Labor has failed to take effective action against an illicit agreement between the electricians' union and the Edison system whereby the union maintains a "hands-off" policy. Labor and the consumers have met defeat at every turn.



How Stockholders Have Profited at the Expense of Labor and the Public Since Brooklyn Edison Combined with Consolidated Gas in 1928.

When Brooklyn Edison was combined with the Consolidated Gas system, Morris L. Ernst, representing the Public Committee on Power, endeavored to oppose the Public Service Commission's unconditional approval of this deal and was all but ousted from the so-called public hearings. It is not without interest to analyze the results of this consolidation. According to Matthew S. Sloan, then president of the Brooklyn Edison Company, the unification meant an annual saving of $17,700,000 to the companies. Within the space of a few months the Consolidated system raised its dividend rate by $8,000,000 per annum and in the following year the dividends were again increased, so that the former holders of Brooklyn Edison and Consolidated stock received $18,000,000 in additional dividends just after the combination took place.

The last official report of the Public Service Commission reflects the stockholders' rewards from this deal. In the year following the combination, dividend payments in the gas and electric industry of New York City, dominated primarily by the Consolidated system, amounted to $43,600,000, representing an increase of 33 per cent over the previous year. During the same year, however, employment (as measured by wages in the industry) increased only 3 per cent. Again, in the following year, dividends were increased by an additional 25 per cent—almost $11,000,000. The pay roll increased only 5 per cent. Thus, during the two years immediately following the merger of Brooklyn Edison with Consolidated Gas, labor received the benefits of increased industry to the extent of 8 per cent, while stockholders reaped 58 per cent more dividends. At the same time the demand for power and gas increased only 10 per cent, while the public paid the same excessive rates. The files of the Public Service Commission reek with Edison scandal: $70,000,000 in accumulated "unification savings" was to be passed on to the public in the form of reduced rates, according to a promise made by Mr. Sloan five years ago, but this has not been done; $150,000,000 in fictitious capitalization is still awaiting investigation; a $50,000,000 permanent annual dividend load paid by consumers is still to be justified; other and hardly less important matters need looking into. Fifteen years of struggle against this situation, during which the Public Service Commission has been besieged with protests, petitions, and complaints, have been virtually barren of results. In fact, the only concrete action taken resulted in a substantial increase in the rates paid by small consumers of electricity. It was announced that the company must have the right to charge a minimum rate as a necessary condition to a well-advertised plan of a "voluntary reduction" of $5,500,000 offered by the Consolidated system in 1930. The reduced rates became effective, however, only when the consumer used more than a specified amount of electricity. Experience has proved that the "reduction" resulted in an increase for 50 per cent of the consumers who were forced to pay the new minimum rate; while the only buyers of electricity who profited by the reduction were the large users, industrial and otherwise.

Lest the consumer despair, it may be said that a recent report had it that the commission is opposed to *further increases* in rates except under "special conditions." Those who have their ears to the ground, however, are unable to report that rate *reductions* have even been rumored.

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The Fifteenth of December

By IDA TREAT

Paris, December 15

IT is not a new discovery that no one likes to pay his debts, or that the grudge against the creditor is human and universal. But from that very instinctive attitude to the actual gesture of default—is a world, as the French say. In the case of the middle-class Frenchman, the default of December 15 implies nothing less than a revolution.

By two in the afternoon of December 13—date of the final session that was to decide the fate of the debt payments—the Chamber of Deputies was in a virtual state of siege, the center of a charmed circle swept clear of all traffic, with 6,000 police and Republican Guards massed on the circumference. Behind the rows of blue uniforms the heavy façade of the Palais Bourbon looked down on an empty square of wet asphalt occupied by a solitary brigadier astride a fretting horse that shied nervously when the automobile of a belated deputy swept over the bridge from the Concorde.

Along the iron fence by the entrance, rows of umbrellas sheltered hundreds of would-be spectators waiting for hours in the December drizzle, in the forlorn hope of squeezing their way into the already crowded galleries. In the discreet background of the rue de l'Université more mounted guards stood in reserve along a massive file of police cars and black Marias ready for emergencies. Along the boulevard St. Germain squads of patrolling *agents* hustled traffic and pedestrians into the side streets, urging the loiterers to "circulate" in no uncertain tones. As the afternoon wore on, the loitering groups grew denser. By five o'clock they had taken on the proportions of a mass demonstration, charged—as all Paris crowds are—with a tense something that needs only a spark to expand and explode. Casual conversations took on a sharper tone, grew heated and aggressive.

"*Bien sûr,* we won't pay. Nobody's going to pay. We've been dupes long enough." That from an orator in a derby hat, his back to a tree in a jostling, applauding circle.

"But what about England? England's let us down," someone called from the outskirts.

"Nothing new about that. What else did you expect?" That bit of sarcasm from the man in the derby provoked such a chorus of invective directed at the neighbors across the Channel that a timid little man in eyeglasses had to tug at the speaker's sleeve to get his attention.

"But, but if we don't pay, then nobody will pay us," the timid little man piped, his voice shrill with excitement.

The derby hat shook him off brutally. "Nobody *has* paid us. That's just the point," he stated gruffly.

"Oo-oo! Down with Hoover! Down with the debts! Down with *all* the debts!" shouted the crowd.

"Socialists!" hissed the little man, "Communists!" And he pushed his way out of the circle.

"Circulez. Circulez." A wedge of blue dug its way into the mass. The crowd eddied but held its ground. On the terrace of a corner cafe a big American brandished a Paris *Herald* over the heads of a row of gesticulating Frenchmen. In the hubbub it was hard to make out whether he was aggressor or aggressed.

The crowd thickened. From every street it poured into the boulevard. A middle-class crowd—employees, functionaries, *jeunesse patriote.*

"A bas les dettes! A bas Herriot! Vive la France!"

From St. Germain, hats on one ear and swinging their heavy canes, glad of the chance to step from political oblivion into the limelight, marched the ranks of *l'Action Française.* At the same moment a massed force of police reserves surged forward.

"Look out for the cops!" A band of small boys scrambled to shelter in the nearest doorway as the storm broke. Fists, canes, and clubs. A crash of glass as the windows of a street car, blocked in the crowd, fell to splinters. A louder crash—the iron tree-guards, deadly weapons of all Paris street fights, wrenched from their sockets, banged to the pavement. Then came a lull. The crowd wavered and broke, to form again a hundred yards away. A row of police cars, packed with noisy demonstrators, moved off to the police station; a few damaged heads found first aid in a pharmacy.

"A demonstration *pour la forme,*" a man in a worker's cap remarked ironically. "A *bagarre* in gloves, so to speak. If you ever saw a real one you'd know the difference."

But still the crowd lingered, surging for hours about the Palais Bourbon, held in check by the police, shouting itself hoarse, while thousands of feet stamped the rhythm: "We won't pay. We won't pay. Down with the debts!"

Behind the façade of the House-Without-Windows it is as if the shouts from without had penetrated the soundproof walls—a discreet echo of the street. In the lobby a solemn delegation of veterans, their chests hung with medals, stand ready with their resolution: no payment under any conditions. In the airless hemicycle, no hand-to-hand fighting but plenty of vigorous invective. The Right, solidly aggressive; the Radicals, splitting; the Socialists against the Radicals; and high to the left the group of Communists dropping judicious oil drops into the flame.

Herriot in the tribune—a heavy man, beads of sweat on his forehead, his features sagging with fatigue. Beaten in advance he maintains his losing fight for the inviolability of contracts, his defense of "what should be the most precious of all—the signature of France."

"What a man, what a heart!" murmurs my neighbor in the gallery where the public sits tense with excitement, like spectators at a match. His next neighbor shrugs his shoulders. This is no time for sentimental effusions. What interests him more is his personal beefsteak. He quotes in an undertone Marin's statement to the effect that France's default will cost the American taxpayer only thirty-two cents; whereas if France pays, the French taxpayer's pocket-book will be twenty dollars lighter. Those are figures that talk.

Down on the floor an approving murmur greets the Premier's eloquence. Applause not for what he says but for the way he says it. Even the Socialists are moved. But admiration for the speaker—a very Latin trait—in no way implies a change of conviction, as the vote proves—402 against

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187. The Cabinet and the debt payment have crashed together. All victory to the man in the street.

The man in the street is elated, even a bit tipsy, to tell the truth, at his success. You owe money and you don't pay. So incredibly easy. But none the less it is a revolution. That is at bottom what bothers the French petit bourgeois and troubles his joy. To begin with, he has an ingrained horror of debt. "I don't owe a sou to anyone," he states proudly. If by chance he does—such accidents will happen—he is characteristically as scrupulous in his payments as he is pitiless toward his personal debtors. A matter of everyday morals; otherwise where would society be?

Now, in his heart of hearts, he is worried. There is somehow a disturbing discrepancy between his attitude toward his own affairs and his attitude toward those of his government. Of course, in the matter of the American debt, he feels that he has ample justification. He has even a convenient scapegoat—Hoover and the moratorium. "If Germany doesn't pay, how can the Americans expect us to?" (His financial policy still clings firmly to the threadbare "L'Allemagne paiera.") Transferred to his private life, however, that argument seems distinctly non-waterproof.

"If I tell my creditors I can't pay because the man next door doesn't pay me, it doesn't help matters," says the man in the Métro. The next step—he knows it—would be a visit from the *huissier*. Is the situation altered because the United States has no all-powerful *huissier* to follow up defaulting debtors? A knotty question. Perhaps the best solution would be to take seriously the sarcasms of La Fouchardière in this morning's *Œuvre*. "France is not the French. . . . A government is a special providence that thinks and spends (*pense et dépense*) for its citizens," who have only to pay or march as the case may be. Relations between governments have no analogy with relations between individuals. As the case of war proves.

The middle-class Frenchman feels uncomfortable. The broken contract, the *chiffon de papier,* sticks in his throat. Then, too, there may be consequences. What will happen next? he asks uneasily. Will it mean loss of credit, the fall of the franc? Inflation? The word strikes terror to the heart of the petty employee, but the manufacturer thinks with a certain complacency that that solution might help him shoulder off some of his personal debts at small cost.

But these are all problems for tomorrow. Today the tension is relaxed. Something springlike and irresponsible floats in the Paris air. Whatever his inner apprehensions, the average Frenchman is jubilant at the gesture of his government. It appeals to his Gallic sense of temerity. "Think of it," says the man in the corner cafe, "last Fourth of July our Ministry of Finance put out the American colors. Symbolic, wasn't it? Now times have changed. This is our Independence Day—if I had my way, every house in Paris would hang out the tricolor."

Congress Studies Relief

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington January 7

THIS Congress is rapidly succumbing to a mood of desperation. Every incoming mail is bursting with heartrending appeals for work or relief. Three days ago a once prosperous citizen who had lost home and business sat in the office of a Senator whom he has known for years and calmly disclosed his plan to end his life unless he found a job before the end of the month. Despite all the shallow wisecracks about the selfishness and insensibility of Congressmen, the strain is telling. That something must be done, and done quickly, is the universal sentiment, but concerning what can be done to avert complete disaster there is no union of minds. Restoration of the purchasing power of silver to enable other nations to buy our products is the demand of Wheeler of Montana and others. Wagner of New York reiterates that the only way to make a dent in the colossal army of unemployed is by the inauguration of a gigantic program of public and semi-public construction. In tones of mounting authority Borah repeats that the world is suffocating under its burden of armaments. The stricken farmer grasps frantically at the domestic-allotment plan, although some of his best friends warn him that it will only aggravate his plight. Through all this fear and confusion runs a steady current of bitter malediction against the man whose persistent procrastination and pollyanna prophecies of "prosperity around the corner" are held responsible for the extremities to which the country has drifted. Two years ago, or even a year ago, they say, the drift could have been arrested; now it may be too late. Out of this willingness to try something—or anything—is growing a very pronounced sentiment for currency inflation, and nobody should be surprised if a measure of that kind passes both houses before March 4. Whether it is likely to provide for additional coinage of silver, new currency issues to be based on government securities, or the simple use of the printing-press, neither I nor anyone else knows at this writing, although a combination of the first two would seem a likely surmise. The important fact is that Congress is rapidly approaching the conclusion that what this country needs is more money in circulation. I suspect there are persons who will concur in it.

* * * * *

THAT Congress does not exaggerate the desperateness of conditions will be recognized by anyone who has studied the testimony before the Senate Manufactures Committee during hearings on the new La Follette-Costigan bill. Members were told that in Chicago 800,000 workers, half the employable population of the city, are idle, and that approximately two-fifths of the employable population of Illinois are unemployed. They were told that 250,000 families in New York State are receiving public relief and that another 100,000 will be added to the rolls before the end of winter. Samuel Goldsmith, director of the Jewish Charities in Chicago, testified that all efforts to administer relief on the basis of "maintaining pride or self-respect" have

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been abandoned, and present endeavors are limited strictly to the prevention of acute physical suffering and death. Witnesses were unanimous in declaring that local taxing agencies have reached the limit of their resources, and that the federal government, with its boundless powers, must come to the rescue if the situation is to be saved. For example, the city of Chicago is five months in arrears on the payment of city employees, owing them a total of $16,000,000. The Board of Education of Cook County owes the teachers five months' salary and other employees seven months' wages, a total of $22,000,000. Cook County is five and a half months behind on the pay of county employees, owing them $5,000,000. Contributions to private relief agencies are falling off steadily, and these are the agencies to which Herbert Hoover for two long years stubbornly referred every supplicant for federal aid! Is it any wonder that the latest of his own commissions to report—that on Recent Social Trends—voices a solemn warning of the danger of revolution? The marvel is that the revolution is not already here.

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MEANTIME, the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, which was Hoover's cure-all for the depression, instead of relieving the situation has succeeded in getting up to its ears in scandal, and faces the threat of a prompt and sweeping investigation by Congress. More than a year ago I wrote in this place that an institution which undertook secretly to lend billions in public funds could avoid scandal only by a miracle. This was common sense, not prophecy. But Mills and Hoover insisted on their secrecy clause—and what is the result? We learn that a loan of $14,000,000 was authorized to the Cleveland bank of which Joseph R. Nutt, treasurer of the Republican National Committee, was chairman of the board; that a loan of $12,000,000 was authorized to the Cleveland bank of which Atlee Pomerene, president of the R. F. C., is a director; that a loan of $13,000,000 was authorized to the Detroit bank of which Roy Chapin, now Secretary of Commerce, is a director; and that $7,000,000 was apportioned to the Globe and Rutgers Fire Insurance Company, headed by the barrel-hearted E. C. Jameson, who will be recalled as the noble philanthropist who furnished Bishop Cannon with $65,000 with which to carry Virginia for Hoover in 1928. The country already knew about the $90,000,000 loan authorized to Charlie Dawes's bank in Chicago a few days after that great patriot resigned from the board of the R. F. C., announcing that his work was finished and the country had been saved. The whole ghastly tale, including the incredible subterfuges employed by Hoover to deceive the country about what was happening, is brilliantly told by John T. Flynn in the January number of *Harpers*—and no one should miss it. Better than anything else it reveals the brutal favoritism and the unparalleled insincerity which have characterized this Administration. Help the rich and lie to the destitute—such has been its philosophy and its rule of conduct.

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IF Walter Lippmann and the other ivory-tower dwellers retained any doubts concerning the temper of Congress toward our defaulting debtors, I trust they finally were disillusioned by the Senate discussion of the subject this week. Not since the kidnaping of the Lindbergh baby has either house exhibited such vehemence or unanimity of opinion on a given subject. The mildest sentiment to be heard was that expressed by Borah when he declared that until the nations of Europe agree upon a program of peaceful cooperation, *including drastic reduction of armaments,* "war debts will be a closed subject." Ranging upward in the scale of bitterness was the assertion of Reed of Pennsylvania that we should refuse to negotiate with any defaulting nation; Joe Robinson's pledge to vote against the ratification of any agreement which might be reached with a defaulter; Gore's envenomed inquiry as to what agreement could possibly be reached with a nation which dishonors its signature; and Hiram Johnson's dramatic peroration: "Ye who advocate cancelation of these debts—beware! If that day comes to pass I warn you that the overburdened American farmer and the jobless American worker will find a way to hurdle or break down the sanctity of private contracts, and seize for himself the same indulgence which his government has extended to the governments of Europe." If anyone supposes that this threat to repudiate private debts in the event our government forgives the war debts is a hollow one, he is lacking in information. The air is full of such talk. And why not? Sixteen days after France defaulted on her miserable $19,000,000 instalment to us, Paris announced that work would proceed immediately on a new battle cruiser which will cost $24,000,000. At almost the same time the Finance Committee of the French Senate approved a loan of $14,000,000 to Austria. Shove that news under the nose of an Iowa farmer who is about to be sold out by the sheriff, and then try to talk to him about "the difficulties of transfer"! No, on second thought, don't do anything of the kind. The only thing to be said for the French is that they have some cause to feel they have been betrayed. What was said between Hoover and Laval at the White House I do not know, but I know this: that when Laval talked to Borah that evening in Stimson's home he was perfectly confident that France needed only to revise reparations payments in order to obtain a revision of the French debt settlement with the United States. However, the French are reputed to be realists. As such, surely they must have known that debt revision rested with Congress—and surely they must have known Hoover. No, the "demagogues" seem to have it. We shall do something for our British cousins; we might even lend a helping hand to Mussolini. But thus far and no farther.

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IT is fitting to record that one of the last acts of the Hoover-Wilbur regime was an attempt to deflate public education. Without such an attempt the public careers of these two great humanitarians would have been incomplete. You will recall their attack on the Children's Bureau. Having failed to undermine this agency for child health, it was only logical that they should undertake to sabotage child education. Accordingly, in the name of the President, Wilbur assembled a conference of hand-picked delegates here to discuss the cost of public education. And what were the topics emphasized? That the number of children in the public schools is increasing, while the number of children (under fourteen years of age) employed in industry is decreasing; that the average yearly wage of teachers has now reached the stupendous figure of $1,430; that the possibility

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of charging tuition fees for high-school courses has not been fully explored; and that money might be saved by abolishing the kindergartens and shortening the length of the school year. As a matter of fact, the law of diminishing tax returns already had pioneered the way for those kindly men, Herbert Hoover and Ray Lyman Wilbur. In four States more than half the rural schools have been closed. Sixty cities have abolished night schools, and 145 have abolished kindergartens. It would appear in this particular respect that the cruel law of nature requires no official assistance. But we must remember that "economy" is a popular word right now, and that poor Hoover imagines he is running for reelection.

Sales Tax or Income Tax?

By ERNEST MINOR PATTERSON

LET no one fancy that fiscal problems this year are simple for our lawmakers. Government services—federal, State, and local—take an important fraction of the national income. A few years ago this fraction was estimated to be about 10 per cent. The decline in the price level and a slackening of economic activity have reduced the national income by perhaps half. Public expenditures have not declined correspondingly; in fact, some lines of government activity have grown rather than diminished. Accordingly, taxes exact a larger percentage of the lowered income. What was a mild problem before is an acute one now. If under such circumstances our legislators become excited and do strange things, there is no real occasion for surprise.

One rather simple fact about taxation is often overlooked. No matter what the nature of the tax imposed, its purpose—and its effect, if successful in operation—is to take from the taxpayer a part of his income. In this sense every tax is an income tax with differences merely in the ways in which incomes are measured and the taxes applied. Another thing to be remembered is that most of the protests against increases in taxation are entirely futile. Not only will taxes continue in the long run to rise in absolute amounts, but they will also increase as a percentage of the national income. Cooperative effort is more and more displacing individual effort. Some of this cooperation is and will be private, but with the growth in the size and complexity of our problems government activities will increase.

Certain reductions in public expenditures may properly be made. Certain old government functions may be abandoned. Some wastes may be stopped, a bit of graft and inefficiency may be eliminated, the decline in the price level may lower some costs of operation. Most inquiries show possible savings without loss of efficiency, but the amounts involved are usually minor as compared with the growing demands for larger outlays. Nothing more than a slight retardation in the upward trend can be hoped for, and most of the proposed economies can be put into effect only after years of delay and in many cases only after constitutional changes.

In fact, a protest should be recorded against the clamor of those who are indiscriminately demanding governmental economies. There are, of course, many public services that are being poorly performed and even many that are no longer needed. Elimination of old ways of doing work, such as copying records by long hand instead of by the photostatic process, would mean large savings. Federal commissions and bureaus placed to suit immediate convenience could be rearranged so as to permit important economies. Our methods of aiding war veterans have been reckless and wasteful.

That many economies are highly desirable is certain, and every effort should be made to effect them, although it is unfortunate that public support in such attempts can be secured only in times like the present, when each individual displaced, even though he is not needed for the efficient conduct of government, may become an addition to the ranks of the unemployed and a claimant for relief. At such times, also, any diminution in government purchases is just as serious for business as a corresponding reduction in private buying.

Both economic and political difficulties are to be encountered in effecting reductions, and the amount of desirable economies that may be obtained will probably be slight. The present demand for savings is apt not to touch the worst abuses, since they are deeply intrenched and have strong political support. In many cases savings can be made only after constitutional changes involving harassing delays. Instead of satisfactory economies we shall probably see the elimination of a few of the newer and more friendless services, regardless of their social importance, and a reduction in the pay of such valuable public servants as the policemen and firemen.

All this means that the problem is primarily one of raising revenues, not of effecting economies. It can best be approached by considering first the local governments, where tax difficulties are most serious. Of necessity these local authorities rely chiefly upon real-estate taxation supplemented by a multitude of fees and licenses. They can locate the owner of real estate and measure his capacity by placing a value upon his property which is tangible and cannot be removed or concealed. To this value a tax rate is applied and in a very crude fashion the owner's income is reached. But in such times as these many owners of real estate have little or no income, and assessed values decline. To increase rates of taxation is useless. Moreover, local governments are restricted in their borrowing power. The net result is that they are hard pressed and display a growing tendency to demand aid from State or national sources.

State governments are less hampered. They have fewer legal restrictions upon their borrowing power, but in many cases their credit is weakened by their existing load of debt and their declining revenues. More sources of revenue are available to them because of their broader base, but unfortunately many States, Pennsylvania, for example, have antiquated and complicated tax systems which cannot readily be adapted to the present emergency. Thus various States, too, are turning to the federal government for relief.

Fortunately the problem in Washington, though acute, is less serious than with the State and local governments. Federal-government credit is good and more reliable sources

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of revenue are available. It is to be expected that a multitude of proposals will appear, ranging from the weird and impossible to those that can effectively be employed if agreement on them can be obtained. But, fortunately or unfortunately, one cannot analyze the problem and propose solutions with reference only to economic considerations. Political and psychological skill are needed and perhaps also the services of the psychiatrist. A federal sales tax of some sort will certainly be among the proposals urged. In its favor it will be argued that it will yield a considerable amount of revenue, is easy to collect, hard to evade, and not acutely noticed by the taxpayer.

Nevertheless, this form of taxation ought not to be employed by the federal government, for three reasons. The first is that it is a regressive tax. We shall do well not to abandon unnecessarily the principle that taxes should be levied as nearly as possible in accordance with ability to pay, and this principle can be applied most definitely and equitably through income and inheritance taxes with highly progressive rates. If the sales tax is to yield any important amount of revenue it must be applied to articles of general consumption, that is, to necessities. The more exceptions made, the less general is the tax and the lower the yield. The poor man, of course, pays a higher percentage of his income for such articles than does the rich. This is serious enough, but becomes worse when the second objection is presented. The sales tax tends to restrict rather than to encourage business. No one can predict in advance its real incidence, but we may at least say this. If it is for the most part shifted to the consumer, it adds to the woes of the common man, who is threatened with many other new burdens, including an estimated $750,000,000 for the aid of agriculture under the proposed domestic-allotment plan. In so far as the sales tax is not shifted to the consumer but is finally paid by the manufacturer, his costs are increased and business is further restricted. And this is at a time when legitimate business needs all the encouragement that can be given it, rather than more restrictions to stifle it. We are already trying to hoist ourselves by the bootstraps by means of other devices, such as by pushing exports and debt collections while restricting imports. To these devices for strangling business a federal sales tax should not be added. The third objection lies in the fact that many States have already imposed a sales tax and others are considering it. New York, for instance, may pass such a measure to raise $53,000,000. The State sales tax has all the objectionable features just discussed. To impose a federal sales tax on top of it would be most unfortunate.

What is the alternative? Nothing that is magical, nothing from which defects are entirely absent. There are two sources of public funds, however, that are superior to the sales tax. These are the income and inheritance taxes. The rates now imposed are about equal to those of 1922. They may quite properly be raised to the 1918 levels. If it be argued that such rates will take too many dollars from certain taxpayers, attention should be concentrated upon what such persons will have left after payments are made rather than upon what they pay. If there are few or no incomes remaining in the higher brackets, the answer is to fix the rates in the law to reach such large incomes as may exist and to meet the proper demand of the man of small or moderate income that he shall not be asked to shoulder the burden without at least an attempt to reach the millionaires.

How much can be obtained from higher income and estate taxes is not easy to estimate, even by experts in the Treasury Department. Nevertheless, the preliminary report giving statistics of income for 1931 is just available and from it the following data are taken for the years 1918 and 1931:

	1918	*1931*
Number of individual returns	4,425,114	3,116,317
Net income in individual returns	$15,924,639,355	$13,231,352,042
Tax in individual returns	1,127,721,835	241,282,875

In 1931 the number of individual returns was 70 per cent of that in 1918. The net income reported was 83 per cent of that in the earlier year, but the taxes in 1931 were only $241,282,875, or 21 per cent of the corresponding figure for 1918. If the same rates as in 1918 had been applicable throughout in 1931, the yield might perhaps have been 83 per cent of the 1918 yield, or over $936,000,000.

This conclusion is a crude one and may not be even approximately true for 1932, a year in which incomes were presumably much less than in 1931. However, it is suggestive. Rates in 1918 included a normal tax of 6 per cent and surtaxes to a maximum of 65 per cent on incomes of $1,000,000 and over. Rates in the Revenue Act of 1932 include normal rates of 4 per cent and 8 per cent and surtaxes to a maximum of 55 per cent on incomes of $1,000,000 and over. For years we have been told that high rates mean a low yield, although the returns and the practice in Europe regularly show the opposite and our own common sense reinforces this evidence.

One special argument against high income and inheritance taxes deserves special reply. It is asserted by many that such taxes drive wealthy persons to invest in tax-exempt securities. This allegation is much exaggerated and to the best of the writer's knowledge has never been supported by any general statistical evidence. All available data show quite the contrary to be true. But even if the temptation exists, the volume of new State and local bond issues is now so small as to be unimportant and the only large volume of new issues is in securities of the federal government. Any great rush for these will lower the yield so much as to be a deterrent; and we should not entirely forget the fundamental argument for tax-exempt issues—the exempt feature lowers the interest rate that must be paid by the government. As soon as possible issues of such securities should be discontinued, but in the meantime their importance appears to be relatively slight.

Of course the budget will not be balanced. Not only will expenditures properly chargeable to capital account be covered by loans, but so will many that under strict accounting methods should be charged to income. Fortunately the credit of the federal government is good. Short-term issues are being floated at amazingly low rates. Long-term issues must give a higher yield but the rates that are offered are by no means excessive. The federal debt will grow until we pull out of the slump. When recovery comes we should reduce it even more rapidly than we did from 1920 to 1930. During that period we retired the debt at what seemed an astonishingly high rate of nearly a billion dollars a year. Perhaps political considerations would have blocked an effort at more rapid reduction, but our present difficulties certainly make clear the necessity for even more strenuous efforts in that direction in future years.

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Ernest Hemingway

An American Byron

By CLIFTON FADIMAN

THERE is always a lost generation; and there is always a book in which it perennially finds itself. One finds itself in "The Sorrows of Werther," another in "Fathers and Sons," still another in "Marius the Epicurean" and "The Picture of Dorian Gray." These books, by a technique of enlargement, clarify the dissatisfaction of a generation that falls in love with the sensation of believing itself lost. They are popular far beyond their deserts because they make lostness picturesque, beautiful, or dramatic. It is better to die like Werther than to live like a Geheimrat. Lostness is promoted from mere bewilderment to the plane of a program. A transformation formula, applied to disintegrating moral values, yields philosophies of suicide, nihilism, or aestheticism.

Ignoring for the moment his purely literary qualities, I would suggest that Ernest Hemingway and his heroes stand in somewhat the same relation to our time as Dorian Gray and the young Goethe and Des Esseintes and particularly, as we shall note, Lord Byron did to theirs. It seems clear that the brilliance of his writing accounts only in part for Hemingway's success. Had he written half as well, but in the same manner and about the same subjects, his dominance would have been as notable. The fact is that he has triumphed more as hero than as artist. Hemingway is a man born in his due time, embodying to perfection the mute longings and confused ideals of a large segment of his own and the succeeding generation. He is the unhappy warrior that many men would like to be. About him has sprung up a real contemporary hero-myth. Do we not see young men adopting the Hemingway attitude as others do the Noel Coward attitude, or as a certain type of young woman, in a desperate effort to prevent herself from becoming a young lady, does the Dorothy Parker attitude?

Why is Hemingway news? Though he heartily despises newspaper publicity (being, indeed, the very Greta Garbo of novelists), his name is more often and more heatedly mentioned in literary circles than that of any other contemporary American writer. It is because this young Lochinvar out of the Middle West is a hero. It is because he apparently creates a new tradition for those who have rejected all the old ones. He provides a modern and more violent romanticism to replace the sickly and worn-out romanticism of the nineteenth century. He takes a spiritual malaise and translates it into something vivid, vital, even splendid, giving to bitterness an exuberance that joy itself cannot match.

The generation for which Hemingway so ably speaks has been often described. No one has characterized it with greater shrewdness or warmer sympathy than Malcolm Cowley. To his analysis little can be added, except perhaps in one respect. The generation that lost itself in the Argonne or among the hassocks of Gertrude Stein's drawing-room was not the only one. A part, very probably the major part, of the succeeding generation is equally lost today, in the crisis. Hemingway's present readers, I would hazard a guess, are largely under thirty. Though to this group the war can mean little more than something in a book, they feel as vitally maimed as the hero of "The Sun Also Rises." They are the defeated and the betrayed, so disillusioned as to have no desire to attack their betrayers. They are too deeply wounded for the easy salve of sophistication. The values with which they have been inoculated they discover to be false. The culture which they have been instructed to flaunt as the badge of their superiority proves hollow. Since most of the grand words have collapsed, they throw them all overboard. They become rebels who smile at reform and offer a bitter shrug to revolution.

Where are these young people to place the animal faith deeply grounded beneath all their tragic rejections? In historical crises, when the flesh of the dominant system has withered away and laid bare the bones of chaos, the superior individual either makes common cause with his fellows in some attempt at a finer order or, as in the novels of Hemingway, retreats upon his instincts. He abandons, as Hemingway puts it, all efforts "to save the world." He cultivates to the point of fetishism those primal emotions which cannot betray him, as his hands and feet cannot betray him. Among these emotions may well be the fear of death and the delight in it, the stoic joy of battle and the pleasurable acceptance of the flesh and the muscles. In the last analysis he worships his reflexes, tending to exalt any activity which the act of introspection cannot corrode. He reverts, however subtly, to the primitive and even the brutal, because on these levels he finds no echo of the culture which has cheated him. He attempts to cling to the hands of the clock, to become a non-political animal, an individualist contemning all creeds, individualism included.

Having forsworn both his national and his class roots, he is at home in all countries. He puts his faith in simple things rather than in complicated words and shakes off all phrases that smack of the metaphysical or the moral. He seeks the companionship and tries to share the experiences of booze-fighters, killers, athletes, and sportsmen, men who lead careers of physical sensation, superficially insulated from the main current of the life of their time. He may even cultivate a special interest in the reactions of animals, creatures unspoiled by the general infection of the world. Above all, he looks for a hero, one who does all this with efficiency and elegance, one who presents a convincing rationale of his behavior and transmutes it into the contemporary eternity of art.

Hemingway is the hero thrown up by the American ferment, as, in a different way and on a profounder level, D. H. Lawrence was thrown up by the industrial ferment of England. Hemingway is the modern primitive, who makes as fresh a start with the emotions as his forefathers did with the soil. He is the frontiersman of the loins, heart, and biceps, the stoic Red Indian minus traditions, scornful of the past, bare of sentimentality, catching the muscular life in a

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plain and muscular prose. He is the hero who distrusts heroism; he is the prophet of those who are without faith.

If we compare Hemingway with a great poet who died a little over a century ago, we get an interesting insight into the manner in which similar epochs evoke similar dominating personalities. In the imagination of young Europeans, Byron occupied a place startlingly analogous to Hemingway's position today. To call the author of "Death in the Afternoon" the American Byron is a bold gesture for anyone who bears respectfully in mind Mr. Hemingway's ceremonial *espada,* not to speak of that matricidal rifle which must have dowered so many ducks with the gift of death. However, let us chance it, at the same time making clear that the comparison is merely between the impacts the two personalities have made upon their times. I am in no way suggesting that there is any analogy between the works the two writers have produced.

Both Byron and Hemingway awake to find themselves famous at twenty-five. Both cut themselves off at an early age from their native lands. Byron adopts Greece and Italy; Hemingway celebrates Spain. In Greece Byron finds the fatal theater in which to stage his worship of liberty. In Spain Hemingway discovers the shrine for his cult of violence. Both are attracted by the glory of military life, and meet with disillusion. Both are highly prepossessing examples of maleness and both exploit an athleticism which wins for them —as much to Byron's satisfaction as to Hemingway's disgust— a matinee-idol popularity among literary young ladies. Both are attracted to wild and romantic places—Byron to the Swiss mountains and the Greek coast, Hemingway to Montana and the Ozarks.

But these Plutarchian parallels are irrelevant beside the profounder similarity which history itself points out for us. Byron is a product of the post-Napoleonic period. His defiant romanticism focuses the turmoil, the disillusion, and the bitterness which flooded Europe after her first great imperialist civil war. Hemingway is no less clearly a product of the second breakdown, and the hard, tense quality of his romanticism marks the difference in spiritual tone between 1825 and 1925. But the two are distinctly post-war men, typical of a period of violently shifting values. Driven by the surrounding chaos in upon their own sensations, they inevitably charge their work with this very chaos from which they seek to escape. Byron, writhing under the spell of the Judeo-Christian myth, prefers to think himself "damned," whereas the Manfred pose is impossible to the more sophisticated Hemingway. But at the heart of both lies a tragic sense of defeat, vitalized by a burning rebellion.

This rebellion they express in an open defiance of conventional morality—Byron with the grandiose gesture of the aristocrat, Hemingway with the casualness of the hard-boiled reporter. In controversy both employ a brilliantly acidulous style, and each, using the language of his day, goes as far as postal regulations will permit. They bear the hallmark of many outstanding modern romantics—a fascinated concern with the more outré aspects of sex. Byron's florid incest-obsession, though partly rooted in his biography, is as much a reflection of current literary fashion as Hemingway's bitter-comic preoccupation with homosexuality, nymphomania, and impotence. Both laugh off their lostness with a certain wild *morbidezza.* Byron drinks from skulls. Hemingway enjoys a nice cold riot in bloody hospital scenes and Peninsular testicle feasts.

The ethical ideals of the two, apparently dissimilar, are actually very much alike, not only in their picturesqueness but in their internal contradictions. Byron is torn between a very real love for the grand words of his epoch—liberty, freedom, the chainless mind—and Don Juan's aristocratic cynicism which negates them all. In Hemingway a not dissimilar opposition exists. In "A Farewell to Arms" he writes: "Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments, and the dates." One can see part of his nature—the hard-boiled half —spurning the grand words which have turned out to be deceivers, while another part—the *panache* half—seeks desperately for a new set of phrases, finding them perhaps in the Spanish *pundonor,* in the super-romantic accent he gives to the death-concept, and in the very vocabulary of disillusion itself. Cynicism and mysticism frequently combine in personalities we think of as "modern."

In the value hierarchy of Hemingway and Byron passion, action, and violence reign supreme. Both exalt sport, though with Byron this is owing partly to his clubfoot and partly to his Tory, country-gentleman tradition. Neither has much capacity for logical reflection, and Goethe's oft-quoted remark about Byron's thinking powers may be applied with some justice to Hemingway. This lack of interest in rational analysis, however, is responsible for a great deal of the drive, energy, and emotional power in the work of the two writers. Both admire the noble, the chivalric individual. ("Nothing ever happens to the brave.") This admiration is founded on the notion of the superior virtues of a trained caste—the samurai feeling. Byron finds this ideal in his cloudy Oriental princes, Hemingway in his matadors. There is a very real cousinship between Manolo, the undefeated bullfighter, and Byron's corsairs and giaours. Worship of a highly specialized, arrogant caste is natural to the man of strong and positive emotion who, whether an early nineteenth-century English lord or a twentieth-century Middle Westerner, can find nothing to admire in the banality of bourgeois culture.

Elsewhere I hope to devote some pages to a discussion of Hemingway's books proper, and to indicate why, as a purely literary figure, he must be considered one of the most distinguished living American writers. This brief note has tried simply to bring out that side of him which we might describe as his social function, his significance as a model of behavior. Like Byron, he expresses the aspirations of that portion of his generation which genuinely feels itself lost and is eager to admire a way of life which combines lostness with courage and color. Both Byron and Hemingway have an unforced faculty for creating an aura of violence, waywardness, and independence which dazzles the imagination of those among their readers who suffer, in Charles Du Bos's admirable phrase, from "the need of fatality." This need of fatality—the courting of violence, darkness, and even death—is a kind of splendid, often very beautiful, disease of the imagination noticeable during periods of social decay. It is frequently the most powerful writers of an epoch—Robinson Jeffers is an example—who are afflicted with it; and among them must surely be named Ernest Hemingway.

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In the Driftway

THE Balearic Islands, until a few years ago, were three beautiful, unobtrusive patches of land lying quietly on the sunny blue expanse of the Mediterranean far off the track of the tourist army that laid waste Europe every year. For the most part only Spaniards from the mainland went vacationing in Mallorca, where winding carriage roads led up to miniature mountains and down to a warm sea, where a thrifty devotee of idleness could live in flower-scented air and simple ease for a dollar a day, if he cared to seek out one of the more remote and primitive sea villages.

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WHAT inevitably happened to Mallorca, Minorca, and Ibiza is briefly and pointedly related in a communication from Madrid that breathes a sad disgust.

> The propaganda of the tourist agencies [writes José M. Estruga] has certainly borne its fruit in the beautiful Balearic Islands, whose inhabitants until now had chosen to live peacefully and cheaply. It was this very cheapness, as well as the enchanting scenery, which attracted the hordes of American, English, and German tourists. A good many went there to stay. As a result, prices have become so high that they are quite out of reach for the Islanders.
>
> Two English and one German newspaper are being published in Palma, with the usual society and gossip columns. People promenade in the streets in the scantiest of beach attire, to the amazement of the natives. Bars, cocktail houses, tea shops, English and American boarding-houses, and English schools have sprung up overnight. A new American-style hotel is being planned to satisfy the taste of millionaires. A club is even being organized, where only English-speaking people will be admitted. The Spaniards in the Islands are looked down upon as aborigines. We are only waiting now for American "hot-dog" and peanut stands to make their appearance.

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IT is a sad story, but not a new one. The interesting thing is that the inhabitants of the Balearics, being a proud and unobsequious race, do not accept their degradation. Ordinarily, the natives of a tourist-ridden country are able to assuage their resentment against the encroaching foreigner by raising prices and making disparaging remarks in a language which the visitors suspect but do not understand. But the Mallorcans, from what the Drifter has heard, are in open revolt against the foreign invader, and have even indicated that they prefer his room to his company. Not long ago they spoke their minds vigorously against the scanty costumes, the cocktails, and other tourist importations that have embarrassed the hitherto sedate streets of Palma; more recently the Mallorcan government decided to exact a license fee from foreign owners of automobiles that would make it extremely impractical to drive a car along the island's quiet roads.

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THE Drifter's sympathies are thoroughly aroused. He only wishes that he were not a foreigner, so that he might be present on the day the citizens of Mallorca drive the tourists into the sea. He believes firmly in the rights of small nations to throw off the foreign yoke. But knowing the tenacity of tourists, he foresees no such happy ending. He is afraid that the only way the Mallorcans will succeed in getting rid of their unwelcome visitors is to move away themselves.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Tariffs and Revenues

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Of course the present Congress will pay no attention, but the new Congress had better begin thinking of the fact that Uncle Sam wants more revenue. Well, a perfectly certain way to get a large increase of revenue is to reduce the tariff on most of the dutiable articles. The well-known fact that at present most of our imports are on the free list is conclusive proof that the duties are too high for revenue; they operate to freeze out trade and so prevent the collection of duties that would be owed on many articles if the rates were low enough to allow some trade.

Of course I have heard the argument that it is just the other way—that since we now import very few of the articles on which the law piles duties, it is proved that the duties have hardly any effect in keeping goods out. But this is one of those propositions that are simply intelligence tests. If a man believes that argument, he has not enough business sense to be competent to express an opinion on economic policy—not even though the American people have chosen him for the highest elective office in their gift, or though he has written a textbook on economics containing that argument.

STEVEN T. BYINGTON

Ballard Vale, Mass., December 27

"Emily Dickinson Face to Face"

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The controversy over Emily Dickinson has come to the front again with the latest attempts of would-be biographers to get at the identity of the famous poet's lover, who inspired some of her finest writing. So far, guesses, rumors, examinations of gravestones, and comparisons of dates have failed to produce anything satisfactory. The near relative and inheritor of Emily's effects refuses to be bullied into revealing her aunt's secrets.

But what, after all, has the man to do with it? To establish the fact that he was an attractive and eloquent divine, pastor of a given congregation in the eighteen fifties, who captured the affections of a young disciple would appear to be the only possible reward of a painstaking search. There were countless clergymen of that type in the Victorian period, followed by adoring females, unable to dramatize their emotions as successfully as Emily, but probably equally desperate in the grip of hopeless passion for a married man. It is not unlikely either that ministers themselves were sometimes hard put to resist temptation. If the long-sought-for personality were pinned down and his identity revealed to the satisfaction of the literary searching parties, we can imagine ensuing disappointment that so gifted a being as Emily Dickinson had made him the subject of her superb outpourings. Even when scientific integrity has done its utmost, there is no accounting for tastes. Would it not be far better to leave the gentleman still obscured and inferentially glorified by mystery?

Lewis Gannett, who has become involved in the fray,

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suggests that the mass of material now held by relatives be turned over to outsiders for a fresh inspection, comparison, and deduction. The prevailing mania for relegating investigations to a commission appears to have attacked him. It is to be undertaken in "fairness" to the person who particularly desired to avoid it during her lifetime and to prevent it after her death! The poet, he asserts with proprietary confidence, is today "more than a family possession; she and her love story are part of the nation's heritage." Very good; but her own evidences of the love story were destroyed by her special command, and only a very small minority of national heirs are demanding any more.

What the lovers of her poems desire is a closer acquaintance with Emily herself—her life and friendships, her interests, her occupations, and her family. The public still stands, with the Amherst community of a century ago, outside that hedge within which she intrenched herself. To know more intimately what went on behind its leafy impenetrability is the demand which Madame Bianchi has met in her new and charming book. It may not contribute much to history to disclose that a distinguished poet could bake gingerbread and "set sail in silks" to make village calls; but the intensity of the poet's girlish friendships, her attitude toward the religious limitations of the time, the stimulating masculine comradeships and correspondences which she kept up through her years of retirement until almost the end, have an importance which cannot be ignored. She will always invite, and baffle, analysis. Would a story of Emily Dickinson's Lover Face to Face clear up the mystery? In any event, it will probably remain a dream of the fact-gatherer.

RUTH HUNTINGTON SESSIONS

Northampton, Mass., January 3

The Federal Worker

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

My faith in *The Nation* as an exponent of the rights of the under-dog received something of a blow when I read the editorial Taxes or Economies? in the issue of December 21. I may as well confess that I am one of "a class protected at the expense of every other class," but my conception of my job evidently differs somewhat from yours. I feel that the compensation I receive for the services I render is quite in order, and I fail to see that I am in the least "supported by taxes on all the others."

You should know that in times of prosperity the federal employee's salary was not commensurate with that of the individual doing comparable work in private industry. Nevertheless, he paid just as much for rent, interest, taxes, light, gas, and telephone bills, as others. Now, you might be interested to learn that of the 700,000 federal employees, 17 per cent receive less than $1,000 per annum, 37 per cent less than $1,500 per annum, 57 per cent less than $2,500 per annum, and 95 per cent less than $3,000 per annum.

For illustration, suppose we consider the $1,500 man. How much does he actually receive? First of all, 3½ per cent is deducted from his check for the retirement fund, which leaves him $120.62 a month. Under President Hoover's furlough plan, effective July 1, 1932, one-eleventh of his basic salary is deducted, leaving $109.26. Employees of the Department of Labor, in accordance with an administrative order which took effect January 1, must now take an additional five days' furlough each month. For our $1,500 man this will mean a further monthly reduction of $20.80, leaving him a net monthly income of $88.46. While this represents a reduction of nearly 30 per cent in his basic salary of $1,500, his loss is still somewhat smaller than the farmer's reported reduction of one-third of his income. However, when I lived on the farm we usually had a bin of potatoes and a fair supply of home-cured pork on hand. I am rather skeptical about the federal employee with his $88.46 being able to keep a very extended supply of either.

San Francisco, December 28 EMERY SIMS

The Tampa Cases

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

The Tampa *Tribune* of December 7 devotes two full columns to telling its readers that "under the heading, Tampa's Reign of Terror, *The Nation* . . . published what purported to be a review of the riotous disturbance here in November, 1931, in which two police officers were wounded and for which fifteen persons, eight of them aliens and described by the State as Communists, were convicted." It admits that the article deals "with facts and conditions which were fully published in Tampa newspapers at the time" but charges that this is an "attempt to stir trouble by trying to make it appear that something that happened a year ago is happening now."

The story, which appeared in *The Nation* of December 6, was a factual account, which can be substantiated in every detail, of the way in which the Tampa authorities, the police, the federal immigration agent there, and the cigar manufacturers fought down and dissolved the Tampa Tobacco Workers Industrial Union, raided its treasury and membership files, threatened its members with deportation, bound all cigar workers to stringent and unfavorable working conditions, and sent fifteen people to jail for an aggregate term of fifty-three years on charges of criminal assault, but on evidence tending to prove only that the defendants were in the building outside of which the police officers were wounded. It is a case which involves fundamental issues of political and civil rights, and it is furthermore aggravated by the brutal treatment the prisoners have received and by the measures which have been taken to prevent their defense. The fact that these men and women were sentenced last February and not last week has nothing to do with the significance of the case.

It is plain even in the defense made by the *Tribune* that the official mind in Tampa does not see any injustice in the fact that these fifteen people were sentenced for criminal assault on evidence tending to prove that their political beliefs were unorthodox. The statement that "the red flag seized by the police . . . was put in as evidence, along with a number of banners which the State contended supported its charge of inciting to riot" is followed by another statement that the fifteen defendants were convicted "on two counts, the first charging assault with intent to commit murder in the first degree and the other charging riotous assault." The State made no charge of inciting a riot and did not try the defendants on the merit of its charges of criminal assault, but under a statute providing that all persons present at the scene of a riot who do not aid the police if asked to do so are responsible for whatever happens to a policeman in that riot; and the evidence even on this charge did not tend to prove whether or not the defendants were asked to help the police, but merely whether or not they were present and whether they were or were not "red," as "red" might be understood in Tampa.

Moreover, these men and women are in jail now, except for two who have gone insane as a result of their treatment; and the thousands of cigar workers who struck in protest when they were first jailed are still suffering from the effects of the lockout and injunction which followed that strike. The Tampa *Tribune* cannot refute my story by saying it is a year old. I challenge the *Tribune* to publish the records of the trial, and for good measure the records of the deportation hearings in-

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volving cigar workers connected with the affair; and I challenge the Tampa authorities to allow investigators and physicians to see its jails and interview and examine the fifteen prisoners sentenced in February.

Letters from Tampa citizens who must be protected by not being named say that *The Nation's* article understated the case; and one pitiful scrawl smuggled out of the jail itself makes terror a dull word to describe the desperate measures by which Tampa quiets its social nerves. The only error of fact that needs to be corrected is the statement in the original story that the case had been appealed, but was pending, owing probably to lack of funds. The first steps toward an appeal were taken and lack of funds did prevent the first hearing, but technically the appeal is yet to be granted or denied, and what happens must be watched, for the story is not yet finished.

New York, December 20 ANITA BRENNER

Erratum

In the article, Shoebuttons for Huckleberries, by Paul Y. Anderson, which appeared in *The Nation* of January 4, two figures were incorrectly printed. It was stated that factory workers in 1932 will receive $7,500,000 less than in 1929, and that $3,500,000 laid up against old age and ill health has been used up. The two figures should have read, respectively, $7,500,000,000 and $3,500,000,000.—EDITORS THE NATION.

Contributors to This Issue

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Books, Art, Music, Drama

Marxism or Tolstoyism?

By HENRY HAZLITT

FOR several months now the suspicion has kept recurring to me that perhaps most of the literary critics who have recently come to think of themselves as Marxists are really much closer to Tolstoy. A new reading of Tolstoy's "What Is Art?" a product of his post-conversion period, has now largely confirmed that suspicion, and seems to make it worth while to examine his position afresh.

"What Is Art?" appeared in 1898. One has to keep constantly reminding oneself of this fact, so contemporary does it sometimes seem in its tone and in its references. It is one of Professor Babbitt's favorite contentions that in all aesthetic movements America lags thirty years behind Europe. That thesis receives disturbing support in Tolstoy's volume. Here is Edmund Wilson, in a book not two years old, introducing us to the symbolists, to Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Huysmans, Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, and all the rest. Here is Max Eastman, in a book still more recent, deriding "the cult of unintelligibility." And there was Tolstoy, thirty-five years ago, introducing the symbolists, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Verlaine, Huysmans, Villiers de L'Isle-Adam, and all the rest, to the Russian public of his day, and denouncing them for their dogma of obscurity.

Before we turn to the similarities between Tolstoy and the so-called literary Marxists, it may be well to begin with the differences. The ultimate criterion of the Marxist critics, as they see it, is an economic one. The criterion of Tolstoy is economic only in a secondary and derived sense; primarily it is ethical and quasi-religious. The final aim of art, Tolstoy held, was to promote "the growth of brotherhood among men," to "unite men with God and with one another." In so far as Tolstoy looks forward to a classless society, he is on common ground with the Communists; yet he is sharply opposed to any class war, or to that art which aims at "uniting the people of one cult only to separate them yet more sharply from the members of other cults, and even to place them in relations of hostility to one another." He did not believe, in other words, that the way to bring about "brotherly love of all men" was to begin with a prolonged period of bloodshed and hatred.

Yet Tolstoy, like our present-day Marxists, was opposed to what he constantly calls "upper-class art," as well as to "upper-class science," and many of his phrases are strikingly Marxian:

> What the members of the upper classes who are occupying themselves with science most want is the maintenance of the system under which they retain their privileges. . . . Therefore one side of science, including theology and philosophy adapted to the existing order, as also history and political economy of the same sort, is chiefly occupied in proving that the existing order is the very one which ought to endure; that it has come into existence and continues to exist by the operation of immutable laws not amenable to human will, and that all efforts to change it are therefore harmful and wrong.

His denunciation of upper-class art is even more scathing. It is a mere amusement-art; it reflects an appallingly narrow range of feelings, and those feelings are nearly all contemptible:

> The range of feelings experienced by the powerful and the rich who have no experience of labor for the support of life is far poorer, more limited, and more insignificant than the range of feelings natural to working people. People of our circle, aestheticians, usually think and say just the contrary of this. I remember how Goncharev, the author, a very clever and educated man but a thorough townsman and an aesthetician, said to me that after Turgenev's "Sportsman's Notebook" there was nothing left to write about in peasant life. It was all used up. The life of working people seemed to him so simple that Turgenev's peasant stories had used up all there was to describe. The life of our wealthy people, with their love affairs and dissatisfaction with themselves, seemed to him full of inexhaustible subject matter. One hero kissed his lady on the palm of her hand, another on her elbow, and a third somewhere else. One man is discontented through idleness, and another because people don't love him. And Goncharev thought that in this sphere there is no end of variety. . . . In reality almost all the feelings of people of our class amount to but three very insignificant and simple feelings—the feeling of pride, the feeling of sexual desire, and the feeling of weariness of life. These three feelings, with their offshoots, form almost the sole subject matter of the art of the rich classes.

In denouncing upper-class art Tolstoy did not, like the Marxians, contrast it with "proletarian" art but with what he called "universal" art. His conscious objective was not an art that would reflect the ideals of one class rather than of another, but one that would reflect the universal ideals of mankind. But here he fell into several confusions. He rejected the upper classes as essentially perverted; he looked upon their education as at bottom a mere indoctrination with false and base ideals; he dismissed all professional critics as "erudite, that is, perverted and at the same time self-confident individuals"; and he ended by taking as his real critic the Russian peasant. Tolstoy in his youth had been tremendously impressed by the works of Rousseau, and it is obvious that Tolstoy's peasant is the exact equivalent of Rousseau's noble savage, the "unspoiled" and "natural" man. Strict adherence to this ideal compelled Tolstoy to glorify ignorance, and he did not shrink from the logic of his choice. "To say that a work of art is good but incomprehensible to the majority of men is the same as saying of some kind of food that it is very good but most people can't eat it." The analogy is unfortunate, for nothing makes clearer than geographic and historical comparisons the extent to which the taste for certain foods is a matter of habit and custom and palate-training. And what of, let us say, the differential calculus? Is it any less valid because it is difficult to understand? Tolstoy comes almost to the point of facing this question. "A speech

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delivered in Chinese may be excellent, and yet remain incomprehensible to me if I do not know Chinese; but what distinguishes a work of art from all other mental activity is just the fact that its language is understood by all." This begs the entire question, and violates all plausibility. Just as, if we do not understand Chinese, we cannot appreciate what is excellent in Chinese, so we cannot appreciate what is excellent in our own language until, after years of growth and training, we have learned that language. And we cannot appreciate what is excellent in art until we have mastered the language of art.

How did Tolstoy come to make his egregious error? It goes back, I think, to his original definition of art. "Art," he holds, "is a human activity consisting in this, that one man, consciously, by means of certain external signs, hands on to others feelings he has lived through, and that others are infected by these feelings and also experience them." This definition holds a valuable truth, for it is obvious that the effectiveness of all art depends upon this infectiousness: indeed, "infectious" and "effective" are here almost synonyms. But while infectiousness is an indispensable condition of art, it soon becomes evident that it is not the essence of it, though Tolstoy clearly believes that it is. "There is one indubitable sign distinguishing real art from its counterfeit—namely, the infectiousness of art. . . . And not only is infection a sure sign of art, but the degree of infectiousness is also the sole measure of excellence in art." It immediately occurs to one to ask how one is to measure degree of infectiousness. Degree in whom? As a criterion, infectiousness is inescapably relative and inescapably subjective. It reflects no more than a relationship between a particular work of art and a particular spectator. A youngster who might be deeply infected by a dime novel would not be infected at all by "Paradise Lost."

Tolstoy never really confronted this problem. He denounced all the Wagnerian operas as counterfeit art, but he never explained how they came to infect the Wagnerites. When he did touch on the question, he begged it. The people who liked "upper-class art" were "perverted" (and "perversion," in Tolstoy, often seems to mean precisely what most of us would call education), while the peasant's sense of smell in such matters was as sure as a hound's. And Tolstoy's peasant, as I have hinted, was never the real peasant, but an idealization: he was, in fact, a small edition of Tolstoy himself. "Such feelings as form the chief subjects of present-day art—say, for instance, honor, patriotism, and amorousness—evoke in a workingman only bewilderment and contempt, or indignation." Well, I for one presume to doubt that the depiction of amorousness evokes either bewilderment or indignation in the average workingman; and I do not believe that that workingman would refer, like Tolstoy, to "odious female nudity" or "women's naked bodies and all sorts of abominations." The movies, burlesque, and the tabloids get along quite well today by working on precisely the opposite theory. Moreover, if "infectiousness" were really the surest sign of art, then art depicting amorousness and women's naked bodies ought to stand very high.

Tolstoy's judgments of actual artists were appalling, and shortly after the middle of the book the reader's interest declines as the argument moves from the relatively plausible to the clearly absurd. Tolstoy begins by dismissing the symbolists for their affectation and obscurity. Then he throws out such writers as Rémy de Gourmont, Pierre Louys, and Huysmans for their "erotic mania." Soon one becomes aware that he is calling Goethe's "Faust" and Shakespeare's "Hamlet" "simulated" art. He rejects all of Wagner and finds Beethoven's later symphonies "artistic ravings." He condemns the work of the Greek tragedians, of Sophocles, Euripides, and Aeschylus, as well as that of Dante, Tasso, and Milton, as "brain-spun" and "invented." And in a mere footnote he consigns practically all his own artistic productions to the category of bad art. What is saved from the wreckage? What art is admirable? Some peasant songs, Millet, and a few obscure paintings portraying poverty, brotherly love, or pity, Schiller's "The Robbers," Hugo's "Les Misérables," Dickens's "The Tale of Two Cities" and "A Christmas Carol," Eliot's "Adam Bede," Dostoevski's work, and "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

What had happened? A doctrinaire had had the courage of his doctrines. And what was wrong with those doctrines? Is not "to unite all men" a noble aim to set for art? No doubt. But such an end, like that of happiness, may often be more successfully achieved obliquely than directly. And it is not the sole end of mankind. The ends of man are irreducibly pluralistic, and so, likewise, are the ends of art.

The appalling conclusions of Tolstoy's "What Is Art?" should serve as a warning to our present "Marxist" critics. The proletarian for whom they want literature hereafter to be written is not the actual proletarian, any more than Tolstoy's peasant was the actual peasant; he is merely an idealized creature, a potential creature—the proletarian as he might become if they could edit him, if they could transmogrify him, if they could vaccinate him with just those elements in bourgeois culture which they approve of, and withhold those of which they have come to disapprove—if, in short, they could make him into a little copy of themselves. If they think that the aim of art should be immediately to precipitate a class struggle, they are giving it a very dubious mission. If they think the aim of art should be to speed the day of a just and humane and classless society, they are giving it a very noble mission. But they should never forget that art may do this in ways at first glance far from obvious. And they should never forget that even such an aim cannot sum up all the ends of man.

Nor from Tolstoy could the new Marxists learn only the weaknesses and pitfalls in their approach; they could learn, also, part of its possible strengths. A sincere and powerful mind like Tolstoy's could not write a book, no matter how wrongheaded its main conclusions, without filling it with many penetrating incidental truths. He was right in seeing in the cult of unintelligibility a sign of decadence, and in the obsession with new forms a symptom of anemia. For when writers have something genuinely fresh to say, something that they vehemently desire to communicate, they do not engage in these little games of half-revealment, half-concealment. It does not occur to them, as it did to Mallarmé, that "to name an object is to take away three-fourths of the enjoyment of the poem, which consists in the happiness of guessing little by little." When they have something real to say, they let the matter dictate the form, not the form the matter. Tolstoy was right, too, in condemning the obsession with sex in art, not for the superstitiously prudish and ascetic reasons that he sometimes gives, but on the wiser ground that this obsession is a sign of a narrowing of the circle of feelings and interests covered by art, a warning signal of impoverishment. He was

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right in his analysis of so much "upper-class art" as the work of idle and satiated men. He was right, finally, in rejecting the view that the function of art is primarily to amuse, and in holding, rather, with whatever mystical and religious confusions, that art must reflect the entire range of man's values, the whole sense of his destiny. Amusement-art might give us "The Mikado"; it could never give us "Macbeth." "Art is not a pleasure, a solace, or an amusement; art is a great matter." And to that perception the author of "War and Peace," and of "Anna Karenina," always held fast.

Poets All

Bentham's Theory of Fictions. By C. K. Ogden. The International Library of Psychology, Philosophy, and Scientific Method. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

MUCH of Bentham's work on the unmasking of the "ghosts" or "fictions" which men mistake for realities was done in the very year of Waterloo—and as could be expected, this "small still voice of one weighing the meaning of words" went unheeded during stress. "Even less was it heeded when the storm had died down," and men began nibbling at the edges of his doctrines while completely neglecting the core. So here we are, a century after his death, at another time of Waterloo, beset by a whole astral sphere of unexorcised, gibbering ghosts. They are, perhaps, with their vague terrors, their "ingenious perversion of the language of praise or blame, to make it comprehend that which did not properly come within the quality expressed," observable in such terms as "raids on the Treasury," "saving the railroads," "national honor," "sound money," "private initiative," "sanctity of contract," "observance of the law," "good for business," "favorable balance of trade," "wholesomeness of our people under strain," "confidence," "fundamentally sound," "scraped bottom." Bentham dreamed of a vast lexicographical project which would eliminate the vaguenesses of words forever, at least the pivotal words of ethics, politics, and law—and though one can imagine wiseacres saying that the meanings of words are funny things to be fooling with while millions are in danger, they might well recall the past great changes wrought in the social structure by "Encyclopedists," writers of dictionaries—and these same objectors will, if they are "practical agitators," go forth to plead with people, from soapboxes, by the hour, attempting nothing other than the reshaping of the terms in which people consider their situation. A wily old trout lives only because he has learned to distinguish the meaning of bait from the meaning of prey; men dodge automobiles successfully because of the meanings that an onrushing car happens to have for them; and, similarly, our social processes may be as dangerous as unsuspected poisons until we have well defined them. *"Give us our rights,* say the thousands and the millions. *Give us our rights,* they say, and they will do well to say so. Yet of all who say so, not one perhaps can say, not one perhaps ever conceived clearly, what it is he thus calls for—what sort of a thing a *right* is." So it might be an eminently practical matter for us to have a thorough technique of definition. Bentham, to eliminate the tragic human bunglings that come of ideological vagueness, would develop a method for making men fully conscious of the linguistic aspects of our thinking.

Language, to guide us, must be a naming. Yet in all probability language did not originate as a naming at all, but as an instrument for exhorting and conveying attitudes. In its origins and underlying machinery it is probably about as much like "thought" as a dog's perking of his ears and bristling of the hairs along his spine when he scents a cat. Bentham would never overlook this unintellectualistic genesis of speech, and would so codify the rules of definition as to guard as much as possible against it. Thus, in the present book, edited by the coauthor of "The Meaning of Meaning," we are shown the ambiguities and vaguenesses inherent in speech, "linguistic" structures which man has attempted to read into the very structure of the universe; we see the bewilderments these ambiguities can cause in human conduct; and we find in outline a methodology of definition whereby they may be avoided. Fundamentally, it is a method for forcing one to disclose the picture-thinking and emotional tinges hidden in the necessarily metaphorical language one employs, and for compelling one to carry one's analysis of vague words (such as "obligation," "rights," "justice") to the point where they are made to refer to "something real and observed."

Bentham knows the tricks of the rhetoricians, tricks so deep that even the rhetoricians are seldom aware of using them—for rhetoric as he conceives it is only too constantly at the command of all. By the Bentham teaching, all men are poets, alas! as they judge and act and exhort their fellows by terms which work upon our unsuspected prejudices, or words which are really talking about two things when they seem to be talking about one. And he knows the handy "appellatives" which have ever come to the assistance of "moral" men by furnishing them with the best motives for their acts, as a simple "love of gain" may appear in the "eulogistic covering" of "industriousness" (devices which he calls "fig-leaves" for the "unseemly parts of the mind").

Bentham expected that not merely one century, but many centuries, would pass before we might have hopes of such a quiet and deep-lying change as is at the bottom of his methods. Meanwhile, we shall probably continue to combat old ghosts with new ones, ever fighting wars henceforth in the name of peace, fantastic wars-to-end-war, and adulating such jungle ways of thought as might serve us better if we were trying to rip live meat with our claws than for properly apportioning the national income. Perhaps for a long time yet flags will be torn down only when there are stormers to raise other flags. This, Bentham would call the "license of cheating people for their good." The Benthamite revolution, on the other hand, will never occur in its purity unless criticism and skepticism can enjoy the place of honor in the state, along with a completely non-theological utilitarianism based accurately upon human pains and pleasures, avoiding those strangely gnarled forms of religiosity which are no less religious, and even *magical,* through the fact that the flaming words of their inspirational cult are to be found primarily in the financial columns of our press.

KENNETH BURKE

Zweig's Tetralogy

Young Woman of 1914. By Arnold Zweig. Translated by Eric Sutton. The Viking Press. $2.50.

IN a note to this novel Zweig declares that until the completion of his four-volume work on the war (of which this, in point of narrative time, is the first and of which "The Case of Sergeant Grischa" is the third and central volume) he "would deprecate any misinterpretation of his intention." Exactly what this means is not clear, but it is perhaps an apology for certain qualities in the book which carry it far below the fine "Grischa," but which, in the light of the completed work, may turn out to have a redeeming structural function. Thus, the light emotional impact of this volume may have been intended to provide for a later crescendo of emotional force. The vagueness of some of the characters may be remedied in their reappearance. Later volumes, too, may give us a fuller picture of German civilian life in war time, which is here adumbrated only through the comparatively slight suffering of the upper middle class.

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Yet even extenuating conjecture cannot explain the sentimentality with which the heroine, Lenore, is conceived, or the uncertainty of what important aspect of the war her story is intended to illuminate. Lenore's lover, Werner Bertin, has gone to war with an eagerness which belies his liberal opinions, his writer's temperament, and, most important to Lenore, their own happy relationship. Indeed, Bertin has looked to the army to relieve him of his artistic isolation and his sense of responsible personality. He becomes temporarily a fatuous person, and in a moment of his new "manly" and "objective" self-assertiveness he practically rapes Lenore, who becomes pregnant. The rest of the book is concerned with the suffering of a sheltered young woman procuring an abortion, with the theory and practice of the operation, with Lenore's bitterness at Bertin's insulation against her misery, and finally with the reconciliation of the lovers in marriage.

Zweig is a writer considerably but not supremely endowed with novelistic skill; it was his strong intelligence playing over the confused aspects of a great theme, the problem of human justice, that made "The Case of Sergeant Grischa" so fine a book. The theme of "Young Woman of 1914" is perhaps not calculated to call forth the play of intelligence, and Zweig's novelistic skill is sufficient only to make an interesting but not an important book. Yet we have the right to expect of Zweig that he present to himself a theme in terms to attract the full play of his intelligence in its execution. LIONEL TRILLING

Shorter Notices

Human Being. By Christopher Morley. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

This is not, as the title and the first chapter suggest, an objective story of a common man. A good many novelists have attempted that feat but few have succeeded. Success in that direction would be especially unlikely for Mr. Morley, as he is one of our most subjective writers, obtaining his material chiefly by gazing patiently in a mirror. And Mr. Morley is not a common man. He is at his best when revealing his own thoughts, fancies, and enthusiasms. This he has done so delightfully in "Human Being" that it impresses one as the ripest and most full-flavored of his books. There are side-splitting pages on the publishing business, picturesque pages on the show business, and understanding pages on the human business. Mr. Morley's sensitiveness to the romance of Manhattan Island comes out in his affection for the "L," with its "Swiss chalets of stations," and in the poetry he finds in Bullinger's railway guide and the directory of the Flatiron Building. One of Mr. Morley's definitions of a human being is "a superb actor in a hokum play," and in an orchestration generally designed for comedy one detects a thin, pleading note of pathos.

Jane Austen's Letters to Her Sister Cassandra and Others. Volume I: 1796-1809; Volume II: 1811-1817. Collected and Edited by R. W. Chapman. Oxford University Press. $12.50.

All the letters of one of the most delightful letter-writers who ever lived, collected in two handsome volumes the editing of which is beyond praise. The letters have many of the best qualities of Jane Austen's novels. They present the minutiae of a small society in language that is always fresh and exact, with a penetration that is only exceeded by the wit which pointed what the eyes saw. They present also Jane Austen in person, as an irresponsible, gay, sharp-tongued girl of twenty-one, and as the mature, generous-hearted woman she grew up to be. She never lost her keenness of observation or her ability to prick vulgarity or pretentiousness when she met with it. The characters in her letters—the flesh-and-blood members of her own large family or her equally large circle of neighbors and friends—are as clearly drawn as are the characters in the novels. If the letters lack the order and the selection which make the novels the works of art they are, they are not wanting in qualities which make them worth reading and reading again. With Mr. Chapman's admirable guides to persons and places everything is clear. And the wit and penetration is clear all by itself, requiring no glossary. From the famous Mrs. Blount with "the same broad face, diamond bandeau, white shoes, pink husband, and fat neck," to the novelist who declared of the second edition of "Sense and Sensibility," "I cannot help hoping that many will feel themselves obliged to buy it. I shall not mind imagining it a disagreeable Duty to them so as they do it," these two volumes afford as good reading as most novels which are heralded as masterpieces.

Paul Bunyan. A Folk-Comedy in Three Acts. By Richard L. Stokes. G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.

Mr. Stokes has fashioned a hilarious farce out of material which is to be found in the books on Paul Bunyan by James Stevens, James Bowman, and others, and in the book by H. L. Mencken on the American language. The language of this rollicking verse is fiercely vernacular and authentically American; the action, touching as it does the present depression and recalling as it does at one point the recent performance of "Lysistrata" on Broadway, is lively and rich. Furthermore, the piece is carefully planned for a stage performance. One hopes that it reaches, say, the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House, where Mr. Stokes's "Merry Mount" is eventually to be heard to the accompaniment of music by Howard Hanson. One really hopes this. The Metropolitan could not do better than to make room on its boards for the fabulous lumber-jack and his Blue Ox Babe.

Emily Dickinson Face to Face. Unpublished Letters with Notes and Reminiscences. By her niece, Martha Dickinson Bianchi. With a Foreword by Alfred Leete Hampson. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.50.

This book includes the author's personal recollections of her aunt, some facts about the Dickinson family, and a good deal of material about Austin Dickinson, Emily's brother and the author's father. There are also some notes that were omitted from the "Life and Letters." The book adds virtually nothing to our knowledge of Emily Dickinson.

Sad Indian. By Thames Williamson. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.

While not, as the jacket announces, the first novel to come out of native Mexico, this is doubtless the first fictionized close-up of folkways south of the Rio Grande by other than a Mexican author. Mr. Williamson has made a careful portrait of the mentality of the *peón* of today—the Indian who still wears the *calzón* and *camisa,* the native pajama-like costume of white cotton, and walks either barefoot or in sandals. It is around his annual journey from his native village of Iztapa to the market town of Techichilco to sell the corn he has raised that the story revolves. Juan is revealed as a primitive of a few deep-seated and unchangeable habits and numerous superstitions, whose chief animus is against the *mestizo,* the "mixed-blood" who despises, dominates, and tricks him. Whether this antipathy of the full-blood is as constant and all-pervading as the author leads one to conclude is open to question. Apart from that this peasant is primarily concerned with satiating his appetites—for food, drink, and sex. Especially drink—*pulque*—the fermented juice of the *maguey,* primordial beverage of Aztecs and Toltecs. This he guzzles till sotted at the town's two *pulquerías,* named "I Am Laughing" and "The Heart of

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Jesus." Though Mr. Williamson confines himself to describing the stupefying effects of the drink on his central character, he suggests the devastation and degeneration pictured in Zola's "L'Assommoir." Here, incidentally, is a refutation of Stuart Chase's thesis of the happy Indian—cheery craftsman and debonair dancer—and of the need of rebuilding Mexico upon him. Instead, we have an existence that is drab, dreary, and dirty, depicted with rare faithfulness of observation, intuition, and craftsmanship.

Authors and the Book Trade. By Frank Swinnerton. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.

One can imagine Mr. Knopf putting this monograph on his list in the wild hope that it might lessen the number of manuscripts submitted for his verdict. A burgeoning author who can read these plain truths about what happens to a book before and after publication and still retain his ambition to follow authorship as a profession must have an overweening confidence in himself. But since ninety-nine out of a hundred burgeoning authors possess just that quality, few will be dissuaded from trying their luck by Mr. Swinnerton's revelations. In essence a wise and witty discussion of a puzzling subject—what makes a book sell—this compact manual approaches the mystery from the angles of the publisher's reader, the publisher, the literary agent, the reviewer, the bookseller, and the reading public. Mr. Swinnerton believes that the success of a book depends neither on advertising nor the praise of critics, but on talk. The matters of production costs, distribution, contracts, and royalties (if any) are set forth explicitly.

Brain. By Lionel Britton. The Vanguard Press. $1.75.

Imaginative power is revealed in this expressionistic play by the author of "Hunger and Love." The scene is the whole earth, and the time the future—fifty million years of it. A group of people form an association to construct a mechanical brain which will coordinate and preserve the thoughts and impulses of humanity before they are dissipated. A secret organization is created first, with the members devoting their lives to building the brain in the Sahara Desert. Eventually brain becomes powerful in spite of the opposition of business men and politicians, and collective reason rules the world. The triumph comes too late, however; men have fought with and preyed upon each other for so long that control of natural forces is not perfect when collision with a star is threatened. Lionel Britton's symbols for communicating this message sometimes lapse into the prophetic tone of the popular-science magazines, but for the most part the play is stimulating and the satire effective.

The Changing Culture of an Indian Tribe. By Margaret Mead. Columbia University Press. $4.50.

"This," says Dr. Clark Wissler in a Foreword, "is a pioneer study in a neglected field." As such it is of importance not merely to the Americanist and anthropological specialist, but also to the sociologist and student of political history. Dr. Mead's approach is purely that of the scientist in search of facts. Her book is a study of the "impact of highly organized modern cultures upon a primitive group," an examination of what has happened and is now going on in the development of a semi-nomadic hunting tribe into "citizens" of a complex, industrialized civilization. The tribe chosen is given the pseudonym of the "Antlers," to avoid offense. It is the remnant of a Mississippi Valley tribe which came in contact, first, with the French, then, about seventy-five years ago, with the Presbyterian missionaries, and then with the white settlers. The Antlers are citizens, though still living on a reservation; many own or have owned their lands in fee, and all are nominally Presbyterian converts, though the Peyote cult seems to be their chief religion. The first part of the study covers their history and general background; the second section deals specifically with the Indian woman under the transitional strains; and the third part gives a full tabular statement of the basic material and statistical data. The conclusion is that the "individual of the primitive society is left floundering in a heterogeneous welter of meaningless uncoordinated and disintegrating institutions."

Art

Art and American Life

THE big news in museums and galleries this season is American art. The Museum of Modern Art assembled a huge choice exhibit of painting and sculpture done by American citizens in the past seventy years, announcing that in this period American art emerged from "the provincial" into "a national and cosmopolitan phase." The pictures were cleverly arranged so that no one could go to see Whistler's Mother without looking also at Eakins and Speicher and Pollet and Benton, to see Demuth and Weber and O'Keeffe without looking also at Burchfield and Ryder and Sloan. The earlier part of the nineteenth century was unconventionally represented by an exhibit of amateur, mostly anonymous, works bracketed under the title of "The Art of the Common Man" in America.

Simultaneously John Becker exhibited a collection of the same period and the same general character as "The Art of the Common Man": romantic landscapes, innocent portraits, fruit and flowers on velvet, quaint mementos in odd techniques. The Whitney Museum cleared all its wall space for modern Americans only, and opened its Benton room, supposedly a reading-room but actually a battlefield because on various fundamental points it contradicts current fashion, as represented in Radio City. First, it is painting and not decoration—that is, it demands and absorbs your attention and arouses strong feelings; second, it is mural painting done *in situ,* and is part of the room, or rather *is* the room, and not an enlargement fastened on an available wall space; third, it has bold social meanings as plain as a poster; and, fourth, alas, the painter was paid just about what the job cost him, and less than the rate per foot paid to commercial decorators for restaurant and hotel jobs.

Each of these exhibits has its own claim to attention, but together they mean a boom, not without ballyhoo, which can be easily traced to the same potent sources as tariffs and "Buy British" campaigns, and which may bring Brooklyn painters to protest before long because the Hotel St. George was decorated by artists living in Manhattan. The source of this movement is resentment at the costly snobbery of the French mode of the nineteen twenties; it takes coherent form in a "Buy American" attack on contracts given to Rivera, Sert, and Brangwyn by those in charge of the Rockefeller projects.

The emotions and issues involved are as powerful as any that ever fed the glow and heat of a renaissance. Given this drive, it is possible that we are indeed witnessing the first stir of a revival or a revolution and a period of great art in our part of this continent; especially as forces at bottom the same launched the powerful Mexican school whose influence is now pushing North American art in the direction taken by the Mexicans—away from small decorative spots destined for private homes, and toward large, monumental, more or less permanent decoration of public buildings; away from the noncommittal, the "art for art's sake" individualist cult, and toward choice of subject with a social meaning, and a purpose, too. Propaganda, in fact. And away, finally, from European modes, toward a violent nationalism that is more anti-foreign than exuberantly

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patriotic, is intensely self-assertive and veers into picturesque local color, emphasizing what is native in subject and style.

Thomas Benton is the first considerable painter in whom these tendencies are clearly marked. He may be a lone phenomenon or else a sort of signpost on a new road. But in the seventy years of American art assembled by the Modern Museum, certain choices of subject and manners of treatment begin to stand out by repetition as possible indications of the direction in which American art has been going and the ideas against which American artists may turn; emphases of subject and manner which would distinguish at once a made-in-America picture hanging, say, in the Tate Gallery or the Munich Pinakothek. These are the things which would help us to define what we mean by American art, other than that the artist is or was entitled to travel on a United States passport; and if our findings do not seem very significant, or do not suggest further inquiry and analysis, it may be that we shall have to discard the term as pure affectation, and that would be useful too.

When the show at the Modern Museum first opened, a collection of Persian frescos was also on exhibit, creating much excitement because they seemed "so modern." The pictures were all variations on the theme of love, contrasting in this respect with the seventy years of American expression on the three floors below, for in that entire collection there was only one indication—a Zorach piece—that such a thing as love between man and woman was known in our part of the Western world. A list of the subjects which would seem to represent us may turn out to represent England as well, and in that we must recognize the influence of powerful traditions upon us. Still, the numerical proportion of one kind of subject to another may point to specific American traits.

The lead is taken by landscape; then portraits, especially of children, genteel ladies, and "types"; then interiors and still-life, particularly flowers; then group-scenes of the "common man," usually picturesque; animals; and, late and few, female nudes. The first three constitute almost the entire range of our folk-painting, reflecting our nineteenth-century art. And yet these ideas do not mean period only, as the moderns at the Whitney Museum group themselves into the same half-dozen species in about the same proportion. They do not mean "human nature" either, for other peoples—the Mexicans for example—almost never handle landscape, our favorite subject, as other than background.

Our insistence on landscape may be one clue to the social and psychological bases of the American style. The pictures themselves disclose that this field has attracted a great many different temperaments, and the traffic develops some traits we can call American because they depart from European modes: a marked sense of space, a hardness of outline, strident color. These qualities appear first and most vigorously in scenes with railroads, automobiles, factories, and less so in what appears to be our other favorite, a type of landscape we might call "unrealism"—exotic, romantic, a dreamy quest for a somewhere else. And in the moderns especially, a combination appears that is typical of our commercial art, of great skill, virtuosity even, with negative feeling, to the point of evasion, where the sense of space becomes a sense of emptiness instead.

Turn to your catalogues of the shows reviewed, or walk through them if they are still open, with an eye out for what being American has meant and may mean artistically; ask yourself why Whistler made witty intangibles and why O'Keeffe paints as if she were deaf. And considering the mark of spiritual isolation on the great mass of this work, it may seem plain that if something is wrong with American art, and the blame is on the artist, the answer may be that our artist as a rule thinks first of himself as an artist and last of himself as a citizen and a thinking, responsible part of his place and time.

ANITA BRENNER

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Music

Our Musical Diet

COMPLAINTS about the monotony of the programs of leading recitalists and conductors are no novelty to this column. They are, moreover, more or less useless, I suppose, as far as the individual artist is concerned. Violinists have their private reasons for never omitting the César Franck Sonata from a program, while most of Beethoven's ten remain so much paper and ink. Mr. Zimbalist will not be dissuaded by the columns of *The Nation* from playing with piano the Mendelssohn Concerto—a work which, away from the orchestra, loses half of its excuse for being, and which everybody knows by heart anyway. There is no use in pointing out to pianists that Beethoven wrote thirty-two sonatas, not six, for their instrument; or to singers that Schubert's songs fill seven published volumes. And yet a plea to them would not have to be based only on the highest considerations of art and taste. It might be offered to them as practical business advice—in some such terms as these:

There are a few artists who shed a new and revealing light even on the most familiar music they play: Toscanini, Kreisler, Casals, Busch, Menuhin, Schnabel, Myra Hess, Rachmaninoff—the list is not much longer. From them, even though one may at times feel that their repertories are unnecessarily limited, one must be grateful for whatever one gets. And, indeed, their function is partly to infuse new life into those greatest and most familiar masterpieces which too frequent inadequate performances have done their worst to kill. But the fact that several of them stick close to a fairly limited repertory makes it more important and should make it easier for the somewhat lesser (and the much lesser) to follow two simple and often coinciding suggestions: (1) Don't play the most familiar music; (2) Don't play the music which we know through the performances of artists with whose interpretations yours cannot escape being unfavorably compared.

One imagines that the purpose of recitalists in competing with one another as they do is to show that they can sing or play a given work as well as or better than their rivals. It seems almost unnecessary to point out to them that what one notices and remembers is not that A sings "Was ist Sylvia?" better than B, or less well than C, but that one has no desire to hear any lesser singer touch it at all until the memory of Lotte Lehmann's singing of it grows less vivid.

But although this sort of advice is lost on recitalists, it should be put in some much stronger form—a subscribers' petition, perhaps—to the management of the Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra. As New York's only permanent orchestra it has a duty to perform which no individual artist need feel, and—since an orchestra's repertory may be practically unlimited—no excuse for not performing it. Mr. Downes of the *Times* recently wrote a Sunday article to insist that Mr. Toscanini is not the only Philharmonic conductor worth listening to. But, rightly or wrongly, Mr. Toscanini is New York's favorite conductor; and the way for Mr. Dobrowen and Mr. Walter to correct the exaggeration of his popularity to the exclusion of his colleagues is certainly not to play his favorite works. For it is not insulting them to say that we do not expect their readings to improve on his, and that we should in any case prefer that they lend their talents to works of which we had heard moving interpretations less recently. Mr. Dobrowen's choice of the Brahms Second Symphony, the Schumann First, and "Tod und Verklärung" was bad enough; the Third "Leonore" Overture was worse, Mr. Toscanini having played it no more than four weeks earlier. But Mr. Walter adds insult to injury when he repeats the proverbial "heavenly lengths" of the Schubert C-Major Symphony—which takes nearly an hour to play—after an interval of exactly six weeks. If I were a Philharmonic subscriber, I should feel like asking for my money back.

It is not as if there were anything inevitable about these repetitions. If the Philharmonic management, or board of directors, wished to avoid them, there would be nothing impossibly difficult about doing so. First a list could be made of the hundred or so standard orchestral works of Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn, Brahms, Wagner, Strauss, Debussy, Stravinsky, and so on. From this list any conductor might be allowed or obliged to draw a certain proportion of the works on his programs; provided that no work on the list (with certain possible exceptions) might be played twice until all had been heard once, and that no work not on the list might be heard more than once every other season, perhaps—except novelties. A certain proportion of the programs could be reserved for novelties; a certain proportion, perhaps, for American music; a certain proportion for conductors' favorites. It might be a rule that only a new or unfamiliar work might be played twice in one season. That the resulting balance on the Philharmonic's programs might have beneficial effects on the box office at non-Toscanini concerts is certainly hinted by the success of the Boston Orchestra concerts in New York. Mr. Koussevitzky is not chiefly a greater conductor than the Philharmonic's guests; he is a wiser and a more considerate program maker.

Mr. Arthur Judson, manager of the Philharmonic, wrote to the *Times* a year or two ago, in answer to complaints about the programs, to explain that he had always kept entirely away from program making, believing that the program, as well as its interpretation, was the proper concern of the conductor. From the manager of the Boston Orchestra this would be a good answer, for the Boston Orchestra is in the hands of one conductor during the entire season. But from the manager of the Philharmonic, where the guest-conductor system prevails, the answer is inadequate; and nothing could have made that fact clearer than the programs of Messrs. Dobrowen and Walter.

ARTHUR MENDEL

Drama

The Victim

THROUGH a reversal of the usual order "Girls in Uniform" (Booth Theater) reaches Broadway some time after the moving picture based upon the same story. The history of this widely exploited tale is decidedly complicated, but it appears that a novel came first and that the present version is adapted from an English stage adaptation of the original. In any event it reveals itself in its present form as a simple and rather affecting little drama, but one which, nevertheless, has something of the sketchiness as well as something of the angularity of a dramatization. Perhaps its air of being watered down is the result of the fact that the dialogue passed through too many uninspired hands before it finally reached us. Perhaps much of the credit for the film should go to the director who saw in it possibilities unrealized in the stage version. But whatever the cause, "Girls in Uniform" is distinctly thin, and would hardly have been a sensation had it not been for the preliminary advertising which it received from the film.

In Germany the play doubtless had a certain social significance. The story of the sensitive child whose spirit was crushed by the deliberately brutal discipline of a Prussian school

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is pointed directly at a lingering tradition which may yet reassert itself and dominate the nation. The portraits of the headmistress and of Her Royal Highness, the patroness of the institution, are heightened almost to the point of caricature in the effort to render as unlovely as possible the inhuman rigidity of the military ideal. But in America, where all this local color has no direct relevance, and where the leading figures are hardly more than legendary, the drama reduces itself to a study in pure pathos. The poor little creature who is abandoned to the merciless mercies of the school is the victim of two phenomena, neither of which she can possibly understand. The "ideals" of the school are to her merely meaningless cruelties, and the fatal love which she feels for the remote but kindly instructress is an emotion without outlet or utterance. Even in death she is ineffectual, because the death of the weak is taken for granted by the system which destroys her. Hence she is pure victim, and therefore the play is pure pathos.

To the play's distinct credit must be set down the fact that it does succeed admirably within its own narrow limitations. A certain almost mathematical rigidity of outline, a direct unrelieved simplicity, keeps it moving, and it is never—as it might so easily be—mawkish. There is great tenderness in the treatment of the central figure and a delicate understanding in the portrayal of her love, but there is an absence of that gush which would have made the whole sickening. Part of the credit for this fact should go to the sincere playing of Florence Williams as the girl, and to Rose Hobart, whose stern beauty fits so well the role of the beloved instructress. The rest probably belongs to the direction, which succeeds often in supplementing the poverty of the dialogue with bits of restrained but eloquent pantomime. All in all, "Girls in Uniform" may be set down as a successful performance in a very minor mode.

"Twentieth Century" (Broadhurst Theater) belongs, on the other hand, to a noisy and typically American variety of topical farce. Its authors, Ben Hecht and Charles MacArthur, probably began with the realization that the club car of an express train racing from Chicago to New York had not yet been exploited as a background, and then set about to imagine what might happen there. What does happen is a series of extravagant occurrences involving a temperamental actress and an equally temperamental producer of Russian Jewish extraction whose general resemblance to a recently spectacular Broadway figure the authors are at no pains to conceal. The result is a wild melange of farce, burlesque, and disorderly conduct which it would be hard to praise soberly but which does manage to be frequently laughable in a reckless sort of way. Eugénie Leontovich, formerly of "Grand Hotel," puts on a fine show as the actress who never forgets to act, and Moffatt Johnston is uncannily clever in his take-off of the melancholy egomaniac who discovers vast possibilities in two stranded German peasants with a passion play in their valise. "Twentieth Century" combines the scandalous interest of the gossip column with farce at its loudest, but it serves its purpose.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

"Goodbye Again," at the Masque Theater, is continuously amusing. Most of the lines are footless, but they are spoken so briskly, by players so well selected, that the comedy seems better than perhaps it is. Osgood Perkins, sardonic and scrawny as ever, is funny both in and out of bed; the calm-browed Sally Bates is an effective foil to him; a scion of The Adams Family impersonates an injured husband with amusing indifference to his injury; and two rosy-cheeked Princeton boys play a chauffeur and a bellboy with credit to their Alma Mater. On the other hand, the part of the wife whose wandering affections provide the complications of the piece is burlesqued so unskilfully by Katherine Squire that the comic balance is often endangered.

G. W.

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GOODBYE AGAIN. Masque Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

GIRLS IN UNIFORM. Booth Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

LUCRECE. Belasco Theater. Beautiful performance of Katherine Cornell in a solemn and rhetorical play about the Roman heroine.

MUSIC IN THE AIR. Alvin Theater. Pleasant operetta with music by Jerome Kern and a book rather better than average.

THE LATE CHRISTOPHER BEAN. Henry Miller Theater. Light comedy from the French completely rewritten by Sidney Howard and charmingly played by Pauline Lord and others. All things considered, it is much the most enjoyable comedy of the season.

TWENTIETH CENTURY. Broadhurst Theater. Reviewed in this issue.

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"At last a comedy so perfect of its kind that it revives one's faith in the theater. It is almost too good to be true." — *Joseph Wood Krutch, "The Nation."*

Meets at Club House **THE GROUP** 150 West 85th St.
Tuesday Evening, January 17th, at 8:30 P. M.
Dr. A. A. BRILL speaks on: **"On Knowing Ourselves"**
This Sunday Afternoon (Jan. 15th), at 4:30 P. M.
DR. SAMUEL D. SCHMALHAUSEN speaks on:
"ARE WE ENTERING THE MARXIAN PERIOD OF HISTORY?"
Sunday afternoon, Jan. 22, 4:30 P. M., Dr. Schmalhausen on
"A PSYCHOLOGIC PORTRAIT OF OUR AGE"
Admission Members 35c Non-Members 50c
Subscription for Membership for year $1.00

SYMPOSIUM
Russia: Promise or Menace!
JANUARY 15, SUNDAY, 8:30 P. M.
Isaac Don LEVINE Corliss LAMONT Algernon LEE
BROOKLYN FORUM — BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC
30 Lafayette Ave., near Flatbush Ave.
Tickets: 25c—55c—$1.10 at Box Office—Rand Book Store—7 E. 15th St., N. Y.
Jan. 22: Paul Blanshard, Lewis Cuvillier, Wm. J. Schieffelin

THE FILM FORUM
invites *Nation* readers to membership.

The Film Forum is a private society which will show to its membership distinguished programs of motion pictures from all countries—films that are now neglected because they differ from the social, political or moral status quo. Also experimental films, short subjects and newsreels.

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Other interesting programs over WEVD:
The Group Theatre—Sunday, 8:30 p. m.
Birth Control—Monday, 5 p. m.
Michael Strange—Tuesday, 5:15 p. m.
Hendrik Van Loon—Friday, 8:15 p. m.

Films

More Celluloid

IF you do not like the kind of literature that is published in the so-called pulp magazines, you just do not like it, and that is the end of it. You do not rush into print to expose the pathetic ineptitude of these weekly or monthly outpourings. With films, unfortunately, the situation is different. Not only are there woefully few that are worthy of serious consideration, but if you happen to be a film critic you are obliged to stop and analyze the incessant flow of bilge issuing from the film factories of Hollywood and elsewhere as if it were really to be measured by the standards of intellectual and artistic achievement. The whole procedure becomes unspeakably grotesque, resembling in a way what the Russians describe as shooting sparrows with cannon balls. Worse still, it becomes wearisomely repetitious, for in the films originality is found in virtues, not, as in real life, in sins.

Yet once more I have to devote this column to the exploration of moving-picture vices. The worst offender to come under review is "Rasputin and the Empress" (Astor Theater). Although one does not expect historical accuracy from Hollywood, the falsification of well-known facts as exemplified in this film goes far beyond the limits of tolerable license. In fact, it is nothing short of political partisanship to represent Czar Nicholas, a shallow-minded weakling who paid with his life for his unfitness to occupy the throne of Russia, as a kindly ruler whose only thought was the well-being of his people. And the portrait of the Czarina as drawn in the film is an extremely prettified version of her true character. In spite of the irrefutable evidence of scheming, ruthlessness, and neurotic megalomania supplied by the Czarina's own letters, the film shows her solely as an affectionate wife and mother whose only concern in life was the happiness of her family. In the attempt to whitewash her memory the author of the film story represents the Czarina as abetting the murder of Rasputin, whereas her letters show that the death of the lecherous monk moved her to bitter cries for vengeance. Aside from such historical inaccuracies, which are too numerous to be cited here in detail, the film does not even stand up as good melodrama. It neither grips one by dramatic suspense nor impresses by any display of histrionics. Lionel Barrymore, who plays Rasputin, never succeeds in suggesting the powerful and magnetic personality which Rasputin undoubtedly had and which largely accounted for his rise to power. John and Ethel Barrymore are no more than colorless ciphers in their respective parts of Prince Paul and the Czarina.

There is little that can be said about "Cynara" (Rivoli). Innocuous in its story and no more than slick in its acting and direction, it might have been fairly entertaining as comedy. As a romance with a touch of tragedy it is merely nebulous.

"The Half-naked Truth" (Mayfair), which relates with considerable gusto the adventures of a high-pressure publicity agent, has many loose ends in its story. Being only a farcical comedy, it goes merrily on without bothering to pick these up—which perhaps does not really matter one way or the other.

There were fascinating possibilities in the story of "Silver Dollar" (Warners' Strand), based on the amazing career of the once famous silver king, H. A. W. Tabor, which might have been realized had the episodes been treated with more imaginative feeling for the details of the background. With its conventional characterization, the film, though it tells an interesting story, fails to rise above the average.

ALEXANDER BAKSHY

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